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THE TIMES

50P

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SATURDAY APRIL 19 1997

TODAY

SINNER AND SAINT
Elisabeth Shue's path to sainthood
MAGAZINE

MUM, MY BOYFRIEND'S STAYING THE NIGHT
The parents' dilemma
WEEKEND, P13

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR WINDFALL
The best ways to cash in
WEEKEND MONEY

WIN A £8,000 FORD KA

WEEKEND, PAGE 8
Premium line entry

THE TIMES FOR ONLY 10P EVERY MONDAY

[illegible]

Grandee leads Europhile backlash

Howe attacks 'damaging' Tory advert

By Philip Webster, Political Editor

LORD Howe of Aberavon, the former Conservative Foreign Secretary, led a fierce pro-European backlash last night against the Tory advertisement depicting Tony Blair as a ventriloquist's dummy on the knee of Helmut Kohl, the German Chancellor.

Lord Howe, one of John Major's strongest supporters in his battle with the Eurorebels, spoke of his disappointment that the Prime Minister should have "gone against his natural instincts" to defend something that could damage Britain's relations with the European Union.

He told *The Times* that on Wednesday Mr Major had shown his wisdom and experience as a leader by his passionate defence of the negotiate-and-decide policy on the single currency. He had shown that he was prepared to put the nation before his party, Lord Howe said.

By allowing the use of the advertisement, and defending it yesterday, Mr Major had risked damaging the partnership with Germany that Britain would need in the future as it did in the past. "It is disappointing that John Major should be obliged by people who would put party before nation to defend something of that kind which is inconsistent with his own position as presented on Wednesday."

Lord Howe called on the party not to use the advertisement again, as the Advertising Standards Authority said it would look into complaints lodged against it. The German Government refused to be drawn, but politicians and diplomats attacked the advertisement. Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, said such campaigning "turns people off in droves". The Referendum Party is publishing its own advertisement with both Mr Major and Mr Blair sitting on Herr Kohl's knees, under the headline: The Iron Men of Europe?

The decision of Lord Howe to go public with his misgivings in the middle of the election campaign was a clear indication of the dismay felt by the pro-European minority in the Tory party over events this week as the single currency revolt has run out of control, and over the advertisement.

Although it has been planned for about a week, its use was brought forward by Tory strategists after Mr Major decided on Wednesday to make Europe the "central issue" of the campaign. It was decided at 11am on Thursday to run the advertisements.

Another pro-European minister declared that "we are close to breaking point" and added that "we are clearly preparing for Opposition". A former Cabinet minister described the advertisement as "dotty and awful". The pro-European Ian Taylor, the Minister for Information Technology, said: "Those of us loyal to John Major's policy expect to be in government after May 1. We will need friends and allies in Europe. This poster is not a very good start." Edwina Currie called it puerile.

Lord Howe, Roy Hattersley, the former Labour deputy leader, and Sir David Steel, the former Liberal leader, have written to *The Times* today endorsing the view of all main party leaders that "Britain would be a loser outside Europe".

One senior Conservative said that Mr Major had been right to ask not to be left "naked going into the conference chamber". He added: "The danger after this is that he will go friendless into the conference chamber."

The advertising authority, which rapped the "demon eyes" poster attacking Mr Blair, received about 20 complaints over the latest advertisement. But Labour, clearly not anxious to prolong the row, did not protest. The authority's council will decide on Monday whether to launch a formal investigation.

Mr Major kept up his personal onslaught against Mr Blair last night. He issued a warning that Mr Blair would be "eaten alive" at the Amsterdam summit on Europe's future. "It would be like sending a fly to a spider's convention," he said in Manchester.

The Prime Minister used some of his most aggressive language to make a string of personal criticisms of Mr Blair's inexperience and inconsistency, claiming he would not win concessions for Britain in European negotiations.

Mr Major insisted the advertisement made a serious point. He accused Mr Blair of "quite gratuitously and quite unnecessarily" surrendering Britain's negotiating position ahead of the Amsterdam summit of European heads of government in June. "The Labour leader has surrendered his negotiating position on the important matters to be determined before he has gone to Amsterdam, before he has won the election."

Mr Major, asked how he could return to Europe to negotiate with Herr Kohl after the advertisement, said the German Chancellor had not surrendered his negotiating position. "Chancellor Kohl will go there and fight for the German people," he said.

ELECTION 97

> ‘I'm betting my shirt on you being wrong. This is not 1992. The mood of the country is different’

Ashdown interview, page 14

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Security review as IRA disrupts travel

By Arthur Leathley and Stewart Tendler

POLICE commanders ordered a security review in the run-up to polling day as the IRA yesterday brought Britain's road and railways to a halt for the third time in a month.

Thousands of drivers, passengers and firms were disrupted as the IRA closed four key railway stations, gridlocked city centres and jammed miles of the M6. In a carefully co-ordinated attack the IRA severed transport links across much of Northern England.

Last night, security surrounding John Major's election campaign was tightened after the Prime Minister was caught up by the disruption. Senior Conservatives voiced alarm that terrorists threatened to blow up two sites of the M6 motorway, each within five miles of constituencies that the Prime Minister was due to visit, Bolton West and Ribble Valley.

Lancashire police said they thought the bomb warnings were not deliberately aimed at Mr Major and that the timing was a coincidence.

Travel chaos, page 2

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SIMON WALKER

Lady Thatcher takes the opportunity to pick up a few groceries in Maldon yesterday

Lady T runs out of credit

Matthew Parris reports on Lady Thatcher's ill-fated shopping trip to Tesco's

FOR the Baroness Thatcher, another Friday, another walkabout. For Shirley Taylor, Tesco till-operator, a nightmare. Lady Thatcher had no cheque guarantee card.

All had gone so swimmingly well. It was British Week at Tesco's in Maldon, Essex, and Union Jacks decorated the merchandise. The Baroness, in stunning blue with a gold English rose brooch, swept in from her blue Daimler. She looked a million dollars. Senior staff stood in line, as if for inspection. Several Tory women swooned, one so excited that her knees gave way.

The former Prime Ministere surveyed the huge store. "It makes shopping so much easier," she breathed. Her hair was perfect. "How *are* you dear she gushed," to randomly selected cheese operatives and shelf-packers. "One does have to be careful one doesn't spend too much," she confided in a female fan. "I named my Dobermann Margaret, after her," the fan later told me.

A shopper asked, nervously: "You are going to support Mr Major, aren't you, Lady Thatcher?"

"Of course, dear." And she began to shop. After a nasty brush with a French apple at the Fresh Produce counter, her eye lighted on a massive carrot. "*British* carrots?" she enquired, with bayonet glance. "From Norfolk, Lady Thatcher." Phew.

"Is Friday your busy day?" she demanded of an awestruck young member of Tesco's staff called Gareth. "No, I expect its Saturday. Good thing I'm here on Friday, then." Gareth was quite overcome.

Pausing for a terrifying instant by the Danish Speckle Bread, she plunged on towards the Selected Crusty White. Bakery staff hovered. "In my day," she told them, "bread grew hard on the shelf."

Lady Thatcher was hitting her stride. She had bought an orange and two lemons and made for the cheese and pâté counter. Eyeing the full fat soft French brie as though the cat had just been sick, she lighted on the England's Choice selection, and selected. A journalist recommended the Brussels Pâté. "I can't stand garlic," she snorted, and selected a Chicken, Mushroom and White

Continued on page 2, col 4

Donor's blood infects patients with HIV

By Ian Murray
medical correspondent

ONE person has died and two others have been infected with the Aids virus after they were given a transfusion of blood from an HIV-positive donor.

The tragedy has exposed a 30-day "window" in the supposedly foolproof system of interview and testing set up in 1985 to prevent contaminated blood being given to patients.

The routine test made of every "pint" is not sensitive enough to detect the infection unless the donor has had the disease for longer than that. A more sensitive test, which might have discovered the blood was infected, is more than twice as expensive, unreliable and difficult to use.

The National Blood Service said yesterday that the system failed because the first-time donor involved had either lied in the regular predonation interview about his or her lifestyle or was unaware of having just caught the disease. Had the questions been answered accurately, blood would not have been taken.

"The donor may have been blissfully unaware of being infected by a partner who had contracted the disease, so it is unlikely there will be any prosecution," a spokeswoman said.

The two surviving infected patients may try to seek compensation in the same way as did haemophlia sufferers infected with contaminated blood before the new screening system was set up. The third victim died of an unrelated condition, but had been infected.

The donation took place in the north-west of England last summer, but the identity and gender of those involved are

Continued on page 2, col 5

INSIDE

Gang rapists sentenced

Seven youths who subjected an Austrian tourist to a "wicked, violent and prolonged" gang rape and threw her into a canal were sentenced to between ten and 12 years' detention.

The youths, two of whom were 14 at the time of the attack, showed no emotion in the dock. Minutes later they were sobbing at the severity of their sentences..............Page 3

Zaire plot to kill Americans

President Mobutu's family are considering plans to kill American expatriates working in the Zairean city of Matadi using an Angolan rebel group.

The plot aims to provoke military intervention to prevent advancing Zairean guerrillas from taking Kinshasa... Page 16

Investors fail to claim shares

Nearly 200,000 members of the Alliance & Leicester Building Society have failed to claim shares estimated to be worth a total of £257.5 million.

The shares represent 9 per cent of the share capital of the society, which reaches the stock market on Monday..........Page 25

Rising price of childhood fame

Parents who want to turn their prodigies into sporting stars like Tiger Woods or Tim Henman or rear a violinist like Nigel Kennedy will find that success comes at a price — in the case of producing a Wimbledon champion, up to £500,000 in training and equipment..........Page 31

Church goes to battle over craze for exotic weddings

By Ruth Gledhill
Religion Correspondent
and Dareh Gregorian

FIGHTING back against the fashion for unconventional wedding ceremonies, the Church of England is to review the medieval requirement that one of a couple must live in a parish before they can have a church wedding there. Parishes say church weddings are declining as more couples take advantage of the marriage law passed two years ago that allows them to marry in 1,500 newly licensed venues, ranging from beach roller coasters and football grounds to pubs and castles.

Some clergy have caused couples distress by strictly interpreting the rules. Others, particularly at fashionable London and pretty countryside churches, have been more flexible in helping couples to find ways around the restrictions.

The Rev Roger Ryan, Vicar of St Mary's in Summerstown, southwest London, said the number of weddings at his church had fallen to two or three a year from five or six in 1988. Unconventional ceremonies were attractive to young people, he said, adding: "My own daughter Sarah and her fiancé, John, weren't married in church — they married in Las Vegas at a wedding chapel where the theme was an Elvis Presley wedding — they had an Elvis lookalike as their best man."

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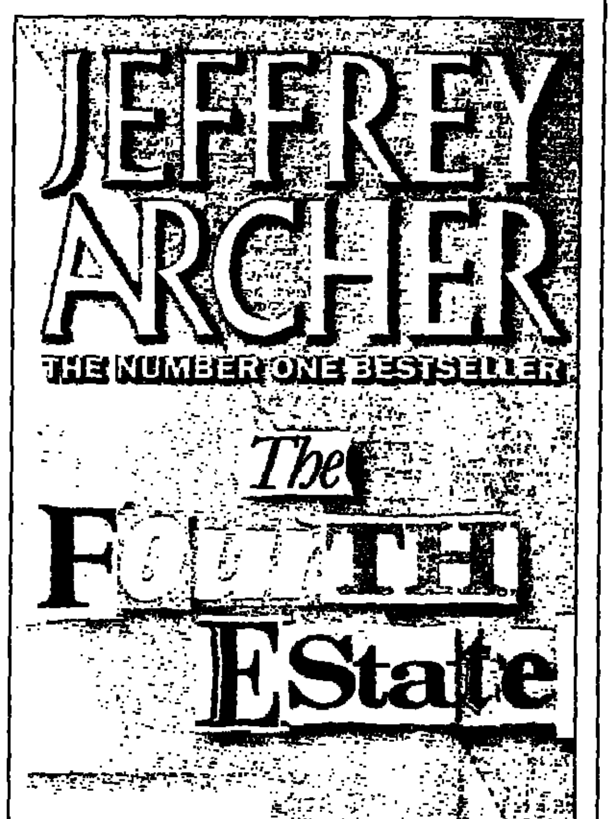

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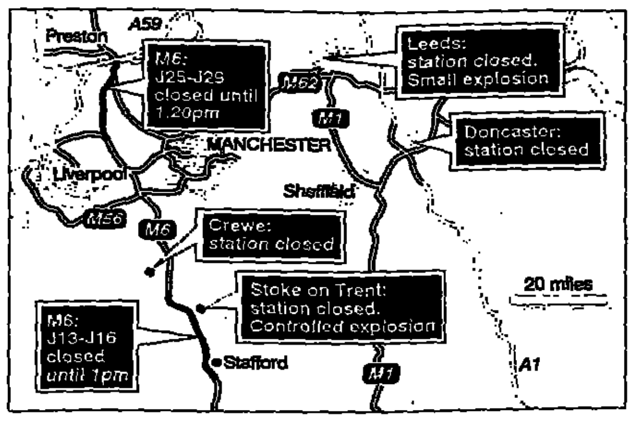
Industry counts cost of latest IRA disruption

By **Stewart Tendler, Paul Wilkinson and Kevin Eason**


Preston
A59
M6: J25-J29 closed until 1.20pm
M62
Leeds: station closed. Small explosion
M1
MANCHESTER
Doncaster: station closed
Liverpool
Sheffield
M56
M6
Crewe: station closed
Stoke on Trent: station closed. Controlled explosion
20 miles
M6: J13-J16 closed until 1pm
Stafford
M1
A1

THE *road and rail* chaos provoked by the IRA in northern England yesterday hit hundreds of thousands of people and cost industry millions of pounds in lost business. *The terrorists forced the closure of four railway stations* and 44 miles of the M6 with a small bomb and a series of hoax calls.

Although no one was injured in the explosion outside *Leeds station it was closed for most of the* day. Telephone warnings also led to the closure of Doncaster, in South Yorkshire and Crewe and Stoke on Trent stations in Staffordshire. The areas *around all four stations* were cleared causing traffic gridlock.

Trains on the east coast line to the North-East and Scotland had to make detours as Great North East railways lost 70 miles of track. Up to 12,000 passengers in 40 trains were hit by the dislocated *service*. About 100 trains *run* by *Virgin Trains* were affected, including main line services to the North-West and Glasgow. The company was also unable to run any cross-country services from the North-West to Doncaster and Leeds. Freight experts calculated that about 100 goods trains were also halted by the incidents and *another* 50,000 *lorries* were caught in jams. The Freight Transport Association said that delays would cost industry a £1 million an hour. The alert began just after 7am in West Yorkshire when an uncoded warning was telephoned to Leeds General Infirmary *about a device at the main station. At 7.20am* Staffordshire police received a message from a member of the public who had received coded warning about devices on the M6 between junctions 14 and 15. *The road was closed from* junction 13 to 18.

The message also warned of bombs at junctions 27 and 28. The road was closed.

There was also a warning of *devices at the stations in Stoke on Trent* and *Doncaster* in South Yorkshire. A few minutes later Cheshire police were given a coded warning about a device at Crewe.

At 9am there was an explosion *in a relay cabinet containing signalling equip*ment about 400 metres from Leeds station.

Just over an hour later at Doncaster there was a blast on a road over a rail bridge on the A638 from Selby. *Later a spokeswoman for South York*shire police said a search team had found the body of a pigeon beneath power lines. At Stoke, there were fears of two devices but neither was a bomb.

British Transport *Police defended their decision not to evacuate* Leeds station until 90 minutes after a call warned of a bomb. It was only when the device exploded that the order was given.

Simon Lubin for the force said: "If we evacuated every time, the terrorists would never have to plant *another bomb and they would have won.* We are *never going* to be 100 per cent certain, but in the end, it's a judgment we have to make and we stand by this one."

The attacks were condemned by John Major, Tony *Blair*, Paddy Ashdown and the Irish Prime Minister, John *Bruton*.

IRA attack 'lost economy £80m'

By **Stewart Tendler and Nicholas Watt**

THE IRA's first co-ordinated attack on *Britain's road and rail networks yesterday* comes *after terrorist* claims that disruption on the M1, M5 and M6 a fortnight ago cost the economy at least £80 million.

The claim was made last week in Sinn Fein's weekly publication *An Phoblacht* and was accompanied by *praise for those behind* the attacks. The publication also praised the *strategy* of so-called low-risk attacks that cause maximum disruption.

The motorway attacks were on April 3. Nine days earlier, on March 26, the same gangs seriously disrupted railway *stations at Wilmslow in Cheshire and* Doncaster in South Yorkshire.

MI5 and the police believe that the IRA is turning to softer attacks because in the past year it has suffered serious setbacks to operations on the mainland. The combination of hoax calls and *small explosive devices has so far* caused *no* casualties, carries few risks to the bombers and has considerable impact.

Professor Paul Rogers, head of peace studies at Bradford University and an expert on terrorism, said the terrorists were plainly concentrating *their efforts on causing* economic havoc. *"It's clear that this is now the main strategy.* They are trying to put every pressure on the Government without causing substantial loss of life."

Police said yesterday's tactics, which included warnings with genuine code words but *no bombs, is now common. More than* 80 *per* cent of coded warnings in recent years have been made without devices being found. A *national system* for assessing the likelihood that a warning *could be genuine* was introduced *almost a decade ago linked to the handful of code words which are now used.*

Caroline and Andrew McGowan, *who were killed as they drove back to Malawi*

Couple killed in Mozambique

By **Tim Jones**

A *BRITISH* couple have been *murdered in an ambush* in *Mozambique*. The bodies of Andrew McGowan and his wife Caroline were found near the border with Malawi on Thursday morning.

The couple, who had lived in Malawi since 1993, were believed to have been shot five *days ago as they travelled from Harare to their home in* Lilongwe, Malawi. They were ambushed in their four-wheel *drive vehicle they drove the* 350 *miles* back, across Mozambique, from the Zimbabwean capital, where Mr McGowan had had a business appointment.

Mr McGowan, 35, a former captain in the Royal Fusiliers, was a financial and business *consultant. His wife,* 30, *taught at a school in Lilongwe.* They had no children. Last night, arrangements were being made for the *bodies to be flown back to Britain.*

Mr McGowan's parents, Ian and Phylis McGowan, live in Fleet, Hampshire. Mrs McGowan's parents, Edmund and Anne Smitheram, live in Ipswich, Suffolk.

The Foreign Office said that it was aware of the danger of *bandit attacks in Mozambique and that it was its practice to* warn Britons accordingly.

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Fishermen stage protests over EU

By **Michael Hornsby**

ANGRY fishermen staged demonstrations at ports round Britain yesterday, letting off smoke flares and burning flags in protest at the European *Union's* common *fisheries policy*.

In Plymouth, about 200 *trawlermen* brought the city centre to a halt, chaining themselves together to form a human barrier across both carriageways of the Royal Parade and scattering fish in the roadway.

Other *protests* were *held at Whitby in Yorkshire, Leigh on Sea in* Essex and Peterhead in Scotland. Plans to send a flotilla of trawlers up the Thames to Westminster were abandoned because of unfavourable tides.

The demonstrations were *timed to coincide with the final stages of the election* campaign and came in the week that Britain was forced to accept a decision by the EU to cut fish catches by up to 30 per cent over five years.

Jim Portus, chief executive of the South West Fish Producers' Organisation, said: "The protests demonstrated exactly how trawlermen feel about the common fisheries policy and the senseless destruction of fish, fishermen and fishing boats."

Trawlermen say they want *control of British fishing grounds returned from* Brussels to the Government. After 2002, even the limited protection now available to British fishermen is scheduled to disappear with the introduction of equal access to all EU fishing grounds.

Photograph, page 24

Blood donor infects patients with HIV

Continued from page 1

not being disclosed. The blood from the infected person was divided into red cells, platelets and plasma. Within a few days three patients each received one of those components, *but the contamination* was discovered only last month after one of them tested positive for HIV.

The service checked its records and found that the patient had received more than a hundred treatments using blood from a number of donors. A small amount of *blood from each donation* is kept for two years so further tests can be made. Checks on those enabled them to track the infected donor and other two recipients.

There are no plans to change the vetting of donors. Since the system was set up 30 *million "pints"* have been given and used and this is the first time in England that anything has gone wrong. There was a similar incident in 1986 in Scotland.

Dr Angela Robinson, medical director of the service, said: "Patients can *be reassured that blood transfusion in this* country is among the safest in the world. I can reassure everyone that no one else is at risk from this event."

Screening involves each donor being interviewed every time blood is given. The interview takes about six minutes and *includes asking straightforward, relevant de*tails of lifestyle. Once blood is taken, it is tested for HIV, hepatitis B and C and syphilis.

Even though the blood is donated, collecting and testing mean every "pint" costs about £40. The platelets component *lasts* for less than a week so it *is impossible to wait for* 30 days before using it.

Lady Thatcher runs out of credit

Continued from page 1

Wine Cream pâté — British. Lady Thatcher *then* requested a surprisingly large slice of Quiche Lorraine — doubtless under the impression that Lorraine was the Essex girl who made it, rather than a place in France.

We made for the beef. "I bought this," she declared, brandishing a *bloody piece of Scottish rump, "because it's £1.50 off."* A tub of Tesco's own-brand strawberry yoghurt was chosen. Cress and Essex lettuce were tossed into the basket. Battered cod was rejected in favour of Tesco's own-brand British bacon, as the Baroness made for the checkout counter, *to ripples of applause and admiration.*

Lady Thatcher took this as a call for an encore. Breaking from her arranged plan, she decided to do a reprise shop: a quick twirl through the fruit and vegetables again, bringing tomatoes and conference pears to the basket. Her detective looked *resigned to the possibility that she would* now go shopping all over again, but the Baroness was headed off by the soft toiletries and diverted to counter 19.

Ah, fateful day for Shirley Taylor! Looking only slightly tense, the operative at counter 19 did everything right. Each *purchase* was rung on the till, and Shirley *remembered to offer her Special Custom*er a Tesco Clubcard, which the Baroness, unconvinced, signed and popped into her handbag. Then she took out her Midland chequebook. The till said £21.44, a sum Shirley Taylor will never forget.

"And your cheque guarantee card?" she asked the Baroness *pleasantly*.

Lady Thatcher *looked blank. Panic* entered the eyes of her staff. Lady Thatcher, suddenly shaky, offered Shirley the Clubcard she had just been given.

"No, a cheque guarantee card," said Shirley, *firmly but politely. "It's an awful nuisance, but it's the rules. I can't put it* through without it."

Disbelieve me if you like, but it looked as though Lady Thatcher did not know what a cheque guarantee card was. Plastic has not entered this Baroness's life. A minder said, desperately, to Shirley "I promise you there won't be any problems," *but Shirley knew the rules.*

"Well, I'll *have to go round putting* everything back," said Lady Thatcher.

Tesco executives groaned inwardly. Then, recovering herself, and in Lady Bracknell tones, the Baroness declared: "Something will have to be done!"

But what? Ah, cash! She opened a *purse*. It contained £25 and no cards. Shirley Taylor's relief was palpable. *Panic* over. They presented Lady Thatcher with flowers. She presented her shopping to a minder, and swept away, to applause.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Farmers attack the beef trade

Retailers were accused of reaping *huge profits* from beef *while* farmers' cattle prices have slumped to their lowest level in 16 years.

Farmers are now getting around 90p for 2.2lb of beef, compared with 94p at the lowest *point* last year and £1.20 before the BSE crisis blew up. But shop prices for beef have fallen much less, averaging £5.70 for 2.2lb now compared with £6.10 before the BSE panic started.

The *latest slump appears* to be caused by cheap beef imports from Europe, the Meat and Livestock Commission said. But a National Farmers' Union official said: "Farmers are very upset because *prices* are very, very *low and one does not* see that in the retail prices."

Kaletsky award

Anatole Kaletsky, *principal* economic commentator and associate editor of *The Times*, has won the Wincott Award for Senior Financial Journalist of the Year. Professor Ian Morrison, chairman of the judges, *said he* presented *complex economic issues* with clarity and vigour.

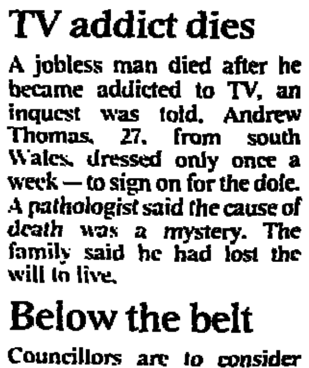
Zoo shoots rhino

A *rhinoceros* has been *shot* dead after escaping from Dublin Zoo. The animal was being loaded into a container for transfer to Longleat Safari Park. A spokesman for Dublin Zoo said: "We deeply regret that the rhino had to be shot but it was *in the interest of public safety.*"

Beetle alert

A live Colorado beetle has been *found among imported* potatoes at the new *Smithfield* market in Manchester. A worker recognised the beetle, which can devastate potato crops, from Ministry of Agriculure posters in the market. In 1995 16 live beetles were detected *in* Britain.

New Bond girl



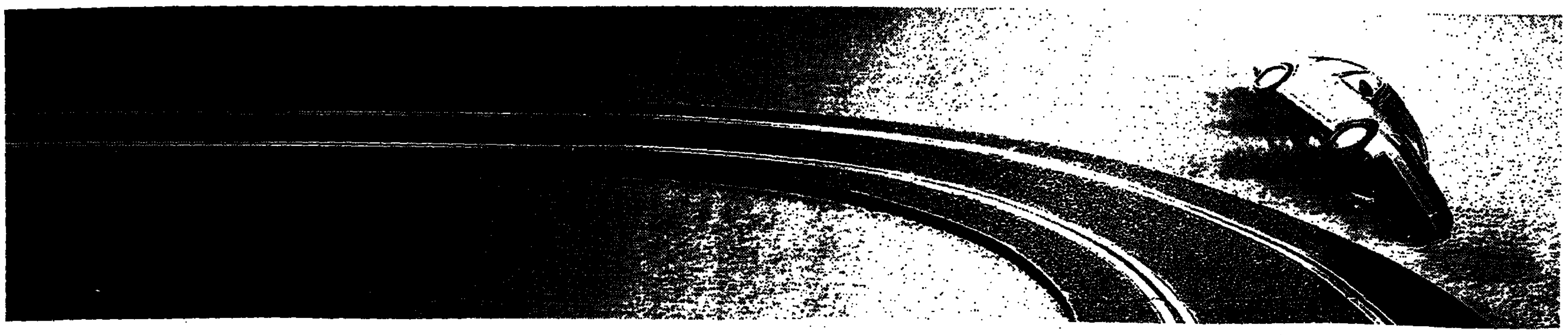
Teri Hatcher has been named as the new girl in James Bond's life. Hatcher, 31, who plays Lois Lane in *The New Adventures of Superman*, will star opposite Pierce *Brosnan in Tomorrow Never Dies*, which starts filming this month. She plays the wife of an evil media mogul.

TV addict dies

A jobless man died after he became addicted to TV, an inquest was told. Andrew Thomas, 27, from south Wales, dressed only once a week — to sign on for the dole. A *pathologist* said the cause of *death* was a *mystery*. The family said he had lost the will to live.

Below the belt

Councillors are *to consider* changing the name of a coastal area of West Sussex to end the sniggers. Villagers in Manhood, a triangular stretch of land jutting into the sea, *have had enough of gibes about its size and shape. Jim* Stokes, a councillor, *said:* "It's a serious point."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Youths weep at long sentences for rape of tourist

'You showed no mercy: she showed immense courage'

By Lin Jenkins

SEVEN *youths who subjected* an Austrian tourist to a "wicked, *violent and prolonged*" gang rape and threw her in a canal *to drown* were sentenced to between 10 and 12 years' *detention yesterday.*

The youths, two of whom were 14 when *they subjected* the woman to the hour-long attack, *showed no emotion as* they appeared for sentence. Minutes later *they were* sobbing in the Old Bailey's cell area, shocked by the *severity* of the sentences. The Recorder of London, Sir Lawrence Verney, said the sentences would have been more severe had they been aged over 21.

He told them: "This case of rape *is* as *horrifying* and revolting as any could be. It contains aggravated features of exceptional wickedness which merit exceptional sentences that combine punishment with a clear warning to any others who may contem*plate similar conduct.*

"You showed no mercy to the *victim: your physical* maturity enabled you to inflict *great suffering upon her.*"

He added that a particularly offensive aspect of the *rape* had been the racial element. As they held their victim head high and ripped her clothes off, one shouted: "The white bitch." It was, said the judge, "a further disgraceful factor in your dreadful conduct".

The judge praised the 33-year-old victim for her bravery in surviving the appalling attack and reliving events in court. "The victim showed immense courage and self-possession, while her dreadful experience continued. Somehow she managed to isolate herself mentally from what was going on. She quickly realised that she could not resist eight of you, so she prudently submitted to the conduct which she loathed.

"*She has suffered* since and is suffering still. Her marriage has broken up and she has lost her home."

Allan Agum, from Hackney, east London, at 4ft 11in *the smallest of the* gang and who was 14 at the time, was given the longest sentence of 12 years. He was the only one to *deny rape but was convicted* last week.

Eduardo *Agum*, *16*, *his* brother, received 11 years, as did Cesar Cardenas, 15, *from* Clerkenwell, and three other youths aged 17, 18 and 16. An order banning their identification was not lifted.

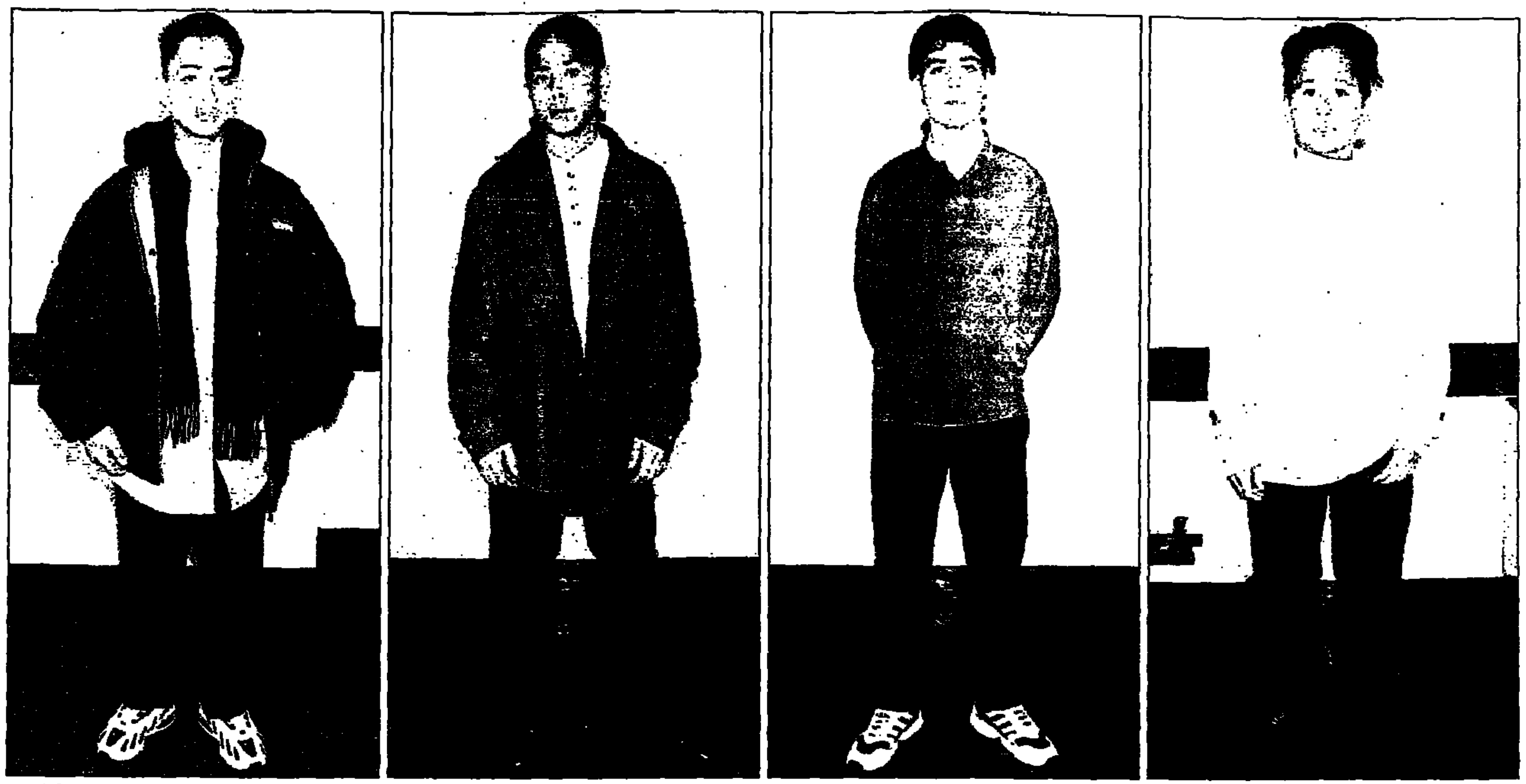
Nicholas *Mavrides*, 16, from Camden, north London, whose confession to his mother led her to tell a social worker, who in turn informed the police, was given ten years.

The eighth member of the gang, the 14-year-old ringleader, who also cannot be named because of the pending trial, is *to be sentenced next month.*

The gang had attacked the *woman as she went for a* midnight stroll around King's Cross, *while on a shopping* trip to London. She was *repeatedly raped by all the* youths, who also demanded oral sex and kicked and abused her. They threw her in the canal when she told them she could not swim.

The youths were not allowed to see their relatives, who had packed the public gallery, before beginning their sentences. Those aged 17 and under were taken to secure accommodation, while the older ones went to a young offenders' institution.

The judge ordered that they all remain under supervision for the whole period of the sentences.



The four named members of the gang, from left: Cesar Cardenas, 15, Eduardo Agum, 16, Nicholas Mavrides, 16, and Allan Agum, 15. Three others were sentenced yesterday

Gang's violent games captured on arcade video

By Lin Jenkins

IN A chilling echo of the night they *brutally raped the Austrian tourist,* the gang responsible — while on bail last week — *were again thrown out* of the amusement arcade where they plotted their attack.

Their violent horseplay in the smokey downstairs pool hall at King's Cross was captured on security video cameras. They were ejected and again the police were called. Fortunately they split up and went home.

The Austrian woman recalled later that they seemed "only babies". But the gang of misfit second-generation immigrants were hardened to life on the streets, and to persistent crime to fund their drug habits. Seven of the eight were on bail for mugging and all focused *their frustration at their futile lives* on white people.

The gang met regularly at the Family Leisure Amusement arcade *opposite King's Cross station.* Each bore a cigarette burn marked deep between thumb and forefinger as a sign of their brotherhood. They shared backgrounds of broken homes, truancy and expulsion from school, and trouble with the police.

The ringleader was three months past his fourteenth birthday when he walked out of Beatrice House, a privately run children's home in Finsbury Park, north London, to roam the streets until the early hours, as he often did. He had been expelled from Holloway Boys School, where three others of the gang spent some of their schooling.

His mother, a former nursery *nurse, lost control of him after her* marriage to a Manchester-born Brit*ish Rail worker collapsed eight years* ago and she developed multiple *sclerosis. Once he was a promising* basketball player. Now he is, in the *minds of police and social workers,* out of control and destined for a life of violent crime.

Cesare Cardenas, 14, the most aggressive of the attackers, came to Britain from Columbia with his parents and two sisters in 1986 and lives with them in a three-bedroom flat in Clerkenwell. The week before the rape he was expelled from Holloway Boys School for robbing a fellow pupil at knifepoint. He had earlier been in trouble for bullying.

Cardenas would spend his nights roaming the streets, drinking cans of beer and smoking cannabis, mugging *for the cash to buy the Pierre* Cardin, Adidas and Nike clothing *that is the hallmark of the gang.*

Brothers Eduardo, 16, and Allan Agum, 15, *live some distance away* from the rest of the gang in Hackney *with their Filipino mother, other* brother and two sisters.The brothers' command of English is so poor that they can barely make themselves understood.

Nicholas Mavrides, 16, whose Greek-Cypriot father is estranged from his mother, is blamed by the others for them getting caught. He alone had a conscience about the appalling crime and woke on the Saturday morning to tell his mother there had been a rape.

Another 17-year-old member of the gang, who cannot be named for legal reasons, lives with his mother, an *immigrant from Venezuela, and* sister in Clerkenwell, but is support*ed by his father, a builder from the* Dominican Republic.Neighbours *say she is a deeply religious woman* who cannot understand how her son became involved with such a gang.

The eldest of the gang, aged 18, never had a job and his name would crop up whenever police investigated some of the most vicious crimes in the area. He lived with his Afro-Carribean mother in a new council house near the station. He was of very low intelligence.

The last member of the group, aged 15, lives beyond the control of his single mother in one of London's most abject council estates in Islington. Police said he found the vicious rape a subject for hilarity.

Husband wishes he had saved marriage as wife rebuilds life

From Sue Masterman in Vienna

The victim: greatest fear is harm to her children

THE rape victim's former *husband, whom she left after* he blamed her for the attack, *sat in the public gallery* yesterday following proceedings through an interpreter. He has said he regretted his behaviour and wished he had volunteered sympathy and saved their marriage.

However his former wife — who was not in court — spoke of her determination to rebuild her life after losing her marriage and the job she loved. What upsets her most is not her own mental scars and the anguish she suffered but the fact that her once-bubbly three-year-old daughter and five-year-old son have been hurt so badly.

"I just want to pick up the bits and get on with my life," *she said through an interpreter.* She has divorced her husband, who treated her callously after the attack, and *found a new job after he told* her colleagues about the rape.

But the children still cry and hate letting her out of their sight. They spend their time *divided between their mother* and their father, Mario. He *claims their pain is all too* apparent: "The other day my son said 'Daddy, I don't want two homes, I want one home, why can't you and Mummy be together again?' "

It is a sentiment he shares. But having rejected his wife after the attack, telling her she must deal with it on her own, he is responsible for the split. His reaction was to tell her to take a bath. When she walked out, he shouted: "Why don't you go back to England so you can get raped again?"

His 33-year-old former wife had not telephoned from London to tell him about the attack because *she knew he* would think it her fault, knew *in her heart that the marriage* would not survive. Then, as she retained *her composure,* refusing to dwell on the details, he became more agitated and tried to provoke her to weep and scream. Instead her rage became directed at him.

She no longer feels safe in her native city. As a fit middle-distance runner she had always *thought she would be* able to escape potential trouble but she did not recognise the gang as a threat. "They were babies, just babies. They were so young. Why should I be afraid of them?"

Now she forces herself to go out with friends. "It can happen to anyone, anywhere, at any time. Still, I make myself go out and go to work."

Her two sisters and her parents have been supportive throughout. "I am trying to be a good mother to my children. I have not told them what happened *because they are too* young. By the time they are *old enough to understand,* it will be ancient history.

"I just hope those boys realise what they have done."

The case, she said, has not attracted publicity in Austria, for which she is deeply grateful. "I have to think of my children. They are the real victims of all this."

Undercover soldier who shot at rat is cleared

By Michael Evans

A SOLDIER *who shot at a rat* with his 9mm Browning pistol during an undercover operation in Hong Kong was cleared of all charges at his court martial yesterday.

Steven Leech, *27, a corporal* in the Royal Marines, had been accused of *neglecting his* duties as commander of the covert unit which *had been in* the New Territories in Hong Kong *monitoring* a suspected Triad gang allegedly smuggling stolen luxury cars to China.

The prosecution at his four-day court martial in Portsmouth had claimed that his *attempt* to shoot the rat, which had been annoying him and *his team* of three, had jeopardised the operation. *Corporal* Leech said that he did not believe the sound of the gunshot *had blown their* cover. He said he shot the rat after being told *about horrific* diseases that the rodents carried.

Corporal Leech, from Hull, was cleared of two charges, including *failing to report* the shooting to his superiors.

Golf club ends up in bunker over raffle

By Audrey Magee

A PLAN *by a golf club to oust* a member who refused to pay *a fine backfired* when a judge ordered the club to turf out a *further 50 members* who had not paid their dues. The club *is also in danger of losing* 200 members who lagged behind *in their subscriptions.*

The Loughrea Golf Club in *the* West of Ireland enlisted the help of Gerard Gately, a *long-standing member,* to sell raffle tickets to raise funds to *extend the nine-hole* golf course. Mr Gately and his wife agreed *to sell nine* £100 tickets. But Mr Gately failed *to receive all the money* from the last ticket he sold in time for the draw *because the* closing date was brought forward. *He was fined £30 by the* club. He refused to pay and was thrown out.

He said: "There were a lot of people who paid the fines but I couldn't on principle. I have been a member of *that* club since 1977. I won competitions for the club and my picture is still hanging on the wall of the clubhouse."

Mr Gately demanded reinstatement and initiated legal proceedings in 1991. In the judgment, handed down this week in Loughrea Circuit Court, Judge Harvey Kenny demanded that the "zero tolerance" attitude displayed towards Mr Gately should be extended to all members. He ordered that "in the interests of fair play" the trustees should kick out the 50 members who had not settled their membership fees.

The judge was told the closing date for membership fees was April 1. But club documentation shows that the official closing date for membership is March 1, making up to 200 more club members at risk of suspension.

Mr Gately is delighted that the club has been embarrassed but is appealing against the ruling to the High Court and is still seeking *reinstatement.*

The club, which has 580 members, *raised* £100,000 through the draw and has *started to develop the 18-hole* course. But the treatment of *Mr Gately has left a bitter* taste. One golfer said: "I think *they're getting everything* they deserve. They tried to *exploit a lot of us with this £30* levy when we were trying to *do a good turn for the club.*"

Boxer was reckless at fireworks display

By A Staff Reporter

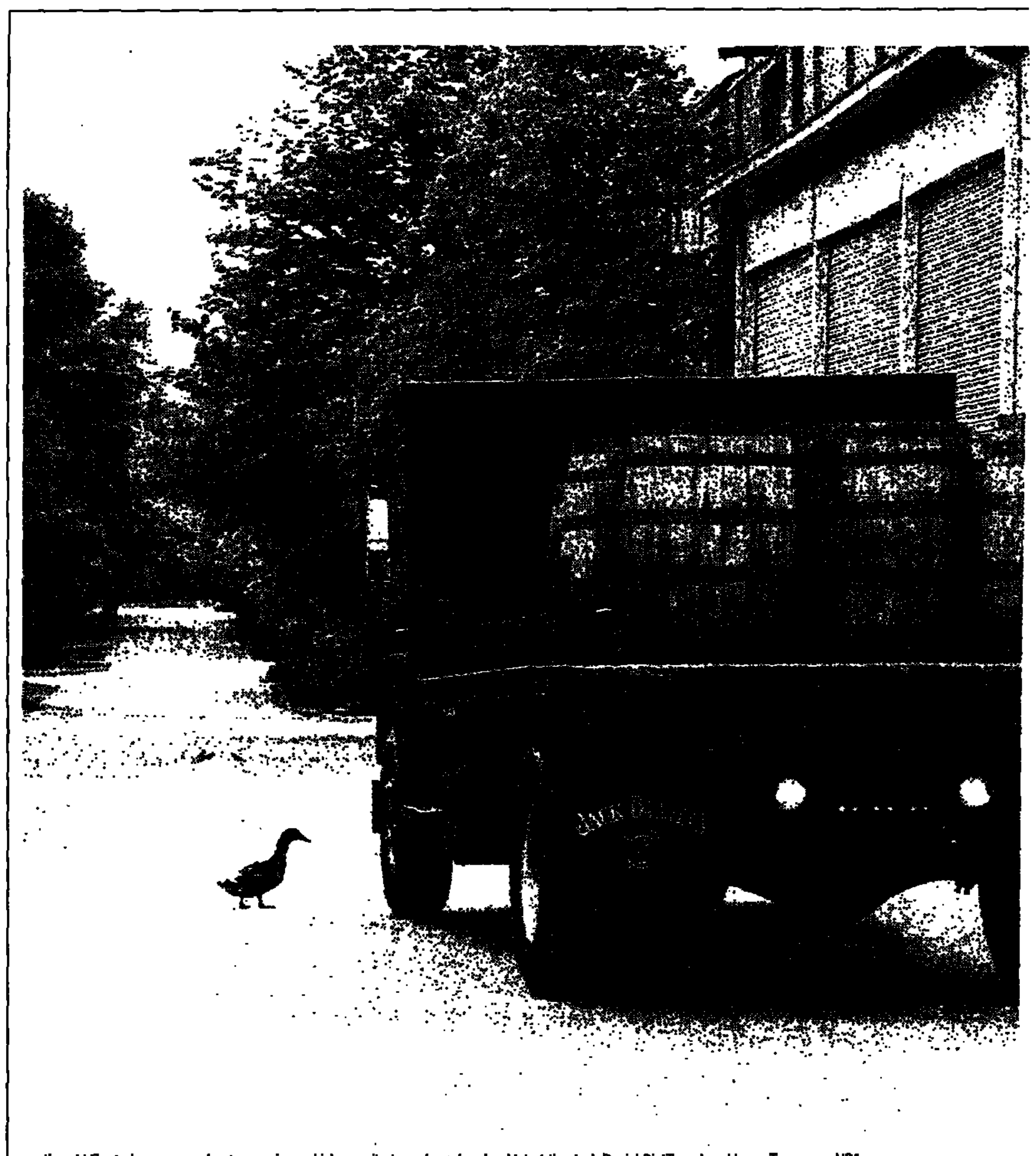
THE former boxing champion Chris Eubank was ordered to do 200 hours community service yesterday after admitting causing grievous bodily harm to two women who were badly burnt at a New Year's Eve fireworks display.

Lewes Crown Court in East Sussex was told that Amanda Marsden, 39, and Anita Wyness, 30, suffered face, neck and shoulder burns when fireworks exploded during the display staged by Eubank on the beach at Brighton in 1995.

Debris was sent showering onto the esplanade and fireworks went off in all directions.

Judge Richard Brown told Eubank, 30, *from Hove:* "Nobody suggests for one *moment you had any intention* that night of causing any *harm to anybody else but the* fact remains your incredibly *reckless conduct led to two* ladies suffering horrific and *permanent injury.*"

Eubank, from Hove, was *ordered to pay £1,140 costs.*



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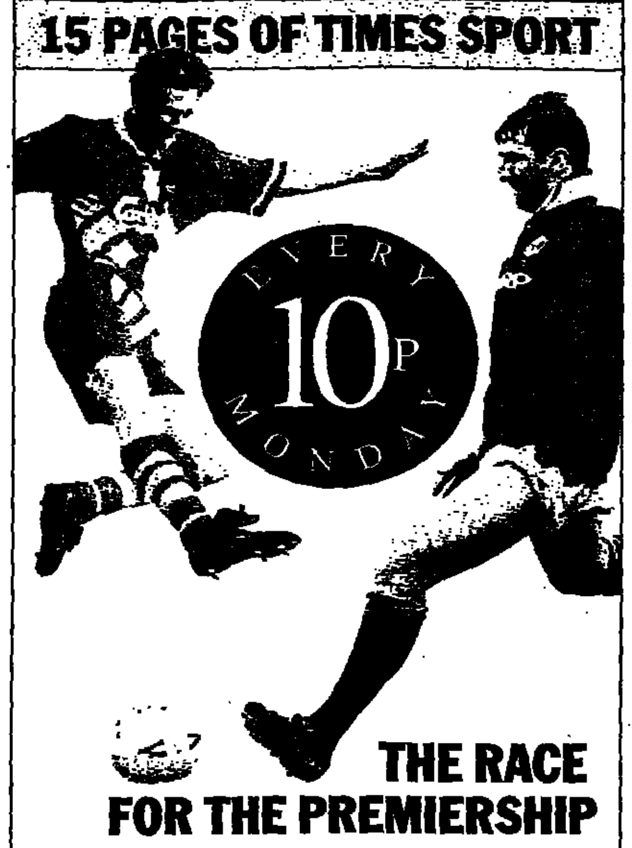

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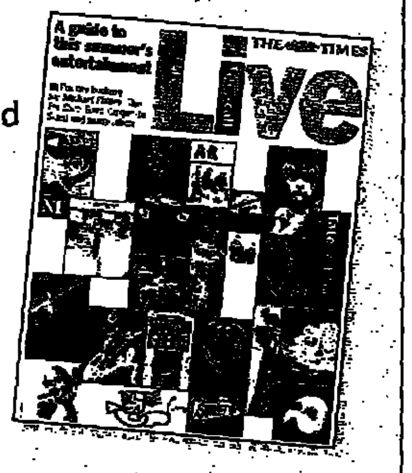

WHY MARRIAGE IS BACK IN FASHION – AT ALL AGES

Operation at home may ease fears over bone-marrow donation

Sister to rethink vital surgery

By Russell Jenkins

Susan Squires, left, with her sister Angela aged 21

THE sister of a woman dying from leukaemia yesterday promised to reconsider her refusal to donate bone marrow for a vital operation.

Angela Latham, 34, from Blackpool, Lancashire, needs the surgery to have any chance of beating the disease but her sister — the only perfect tissue match — had refused because she is terrified of hospitals.

The pleas of Mrs Latham's family and her hospital specialists were answered when Susan Squires, 39, promised in an emotional meeting with Mrs Latham's husband, Paul, to rethink her decision and hinted that, if the surgery could be performed in her home, that she would change her mind.

Mr Latham then returned to his home 500 yards away to tell his wife that the answer was "rather more a yes than a no". It was the most heartening news for the couple in three years and may signal an end to a bitter family feud.

Mrs Latham, the mother of Ashley, 12, and Bernadette, 6, said she would give her sister a big hug when she next saw her and "get back to being a family again". "It is a relief to know that she is thinking about the operation," Mrs Latham said.

"How can you hate your own flesh and blood? I have never hated her. Hopefully she will save my life now she knows she does not have to go to hospital. It [Mrs Latham's illness] hit everyone in the family hard and unfortunately her reaction has been the hardest. I do feel sympathy for her. With her being flesh and blood you would not have thought she would turn me down but I don't hate her."

Mrs Latham is undergoing drug therapy after a course of chemotherapy failed to stem the spread of the disease, diagnosed in August 1994. For three years she and her sister, once good friends, have barely spoken. Miss Squires, who has a daughter aged 16, went for a blood test at Blackpool's Victoria Hospital, where her sister is being treated, discovered she was a perfect match but then refused to go ahead with what surgeons claim is a relatively simple, and minimally painful, operation under local anaesthetic to extract bone marrow.

Mrs Latham went to the media to publicise her plight earlier this week as a "last throw of the dice". Paul Latham went to see his sister-in-law to make a final appeal. He found her in a highly emotional state.

"We are all talking again," Mr Latham said. "She is shaking in there. She is crying her eyes out. She is suffering. When I told her she would not have to go into hospital there was a glint in her eye. You could tell that made her feel a little bit better."

Mrs Latham said: "Hopefully she won't turn me down but, if she does, then I have tried everything I possibly can."

Mrs Latham said if her sister decided against the operation, she would respect that decision. "We would stay sisters but I would hope to God she does not decide that way."

Girl, 14, tells how 'hero' boyfriend died saving her life

By Kathryn Knight

A GIRL aged 14 wept yesterday as she described how her boyfriend had sacrificed his life to push her out the path of a car. Laura Gledhill said that Paul Broughton, 16, had taken the full impact of the collision as they crossed the road and was thrown into the path of a second car. He died of heart failure in hospital.

"Paul saved my life. He was a hero, I owe my life to him," she said.

Earlier this week Chris Dorries, the Sheffield coroner, recorded a verdict of accidental death on Paul, who died in November last year.

Laura said yesterday that they had been seeing friends and had caught the bus to their homes in Monk Bretton, Barnsley. As they crossed the road, a Volvo had appeared around a bend.

"I didn't see the car coming but Paul turned towards me and shouted 'Move'. Then he pushed me out of the way and the car hit him. The second car hit him and as he lay in the road he called 'Laura'. That was the last word he spoke.

"If he hadn't shielded me and pushed me clear the car would have hit me, not him. He didn't even stop to think about it. We had been going out together for a few months and I thought the world of him. I miss him so much."

Paul, a keen Manchester United supporter, was training as a construction worker at Barnsley College. He was buried in his football kit.

His father, Alan Broughton, 47, said: "I'm so proud of what he did and the boy he was. He was one in a million and we miss him so much. He was trying to protect Laura. He had told us that he loved her very much and I have no doubt their relationship would have developed."

Paul's mother, Margaret, 44, a home carer, said: "As Paul crossed the road he must have caught a glimpse of the car because he pushed Laura out of the way. No one can imagine what it feels like to bury your son. We loved him so much. We're devastated."

Paul Broughton and Laura Gledhill, who had been going out for several months

NEWS IN BRIEF

IBM pays police £1m for system collapse

A consortium of police forces has accepted £1.2 million from IBM after the collapse of a computer system for identifying fingerprints. Launched in 1992, it was hailed as a breakthrough which would speed up matching prints found at scenes of crime with records. A different system had to be adopted. Hampshire police, which represents the consortium of 37 forces, said that it had accepted a payment into court. The case had been expected to be heard next year.

Transplant claim

Judgment has been reserved over the High Court damages claim against Hillingdon Health Authority on behalf of Matthew Poynter, ten, of Biggleswade, Bedfordshire, who suffered brain damage after a heart transplant.

Appeal verdict

John Torney, 42, an RUC constable jailed for murdering his wife and two children, lost his appeal against conviction. At the High Court in Belfast, Lord Justice MacDermott rejected the claim that the verdict was unsafe.

Singer charged

The singer Brian Harvey, 22, formerly with East 17, opted for a jury trial when he appeared before Bow Street magistrates on three charges, including assaulting a photographer outside Stringfellow's nightclub in London.

Bright spark

A mystery figure has been jamming street lights in Tranent, East Lothian, so that they are permanently on. Only one sighting — of a figure wearing a yellow council worker's coat — has been made in 18 months of attacks.

Bus ride to jail

When David Joel, 33, called his wife to ask for a lift home after he had been out drinking, she told him to take the bus. He went to Lincoln bus station and drove off in one while 3½ times the limit. Joel was jailed for five months.

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Crime writer sticks knife into Tories on education

By Dalya Alberge, Arts Correspondent

THE author of the bestselling Inspector Morse stories, Colin Dexter, yesterday launched an impassioned attack on falling standards of literacy in schools after winning the Cartier Diamond Dagger Award for his outstanding contribution to detective writing.

"Children don't know what a full stop is," he said, adding that they lacked the most basic grasp of spelling, punctuation and handwriting. "It's a public confidence trick to be told that standards in education at 16 or 18 are going up. The vast majority know perfectly well that that is not true. When people say the evidence is only anecdotal, I often wonder what is wrong with anecdotal evidence."

Dexter: attacked falling standards of literacy

He based his views on the "thousand and one teachers" he has worked with and befriended, both as a classics teacher in the 1950s and 1960s and more recently while working for the Oxford University examinations board: "Morale is very low. I know many who have not only left but have been driven out, nervous wrecks . . . discipline problems . . . It comes down to the things you spend your money on."

He added: "We oughtn't to kid ourselves. . . It's getting worse. Children can't do sums at 11 and 13. We fool ourselves that everyone is passing five O levels."

He attacked Gillian Shephard, the Education Secretary, for failing to understand the importance of small classes. "I wonder if she's ever taken in books to mark from a class of 60. It makes all the difference if it's a class of 60 or 30 or 15. We've got to go for smaller classes." He said that it was no wonder that parents were paying £12,000 for better teaching and improved staff to pupil ratio.

He plans to vote Labour. "Their heart's in the right place. I feel the Tories are not interested in anything but the education of the elitist few. The majority of pupils are treated pretty shabbily."

Ironically, however, he supports the Conservatives' assisted places scheme. Writing in *The Mail on Sunday* last December he recalled how, like his brother and sister, he won a scholarship to Stamford School in Lincolnshire. "We were poor but my parents saw education as a privilege which they had been denied and which they were determined we would receive . . . We were conscious that we were privileged," he wrote.

"Particularly those of us who had been admitted to Stamford through scholarships and yet sat alongside fee-paying pupils. We were not joining a social elite; we were simply being given a chance to learn and exploit our talents." He was concerned that ending the scholarships could prevent those without resources realising their potential.

Although the latest series of Morse topped the ratings with 18 million viewers, Mr Dexter, 67, said: "We can all do with a pat on the back." He spoke of the thrill of being associated with previous winners such as P. D. James and Ruth Rendell. Gold and silver daggers have been awarded to outstanding writers since 1986 by The Crime Writers' Association, established in 1953 to promote "the highest standards in crime writing".

Mr Dexter will not be keeping his trophy at his home in Oxford: it is made by the jewellers Cartier of gold and silver with a large ruby cabochon surrounded by diamonds. "No one would dare keep it. It would put up your household insurance."

He said he did not plan another book. "I've murdered enough people," he said, joking about having made Oxford the murder capital of Europe.

□ However, the plot thickened. John Thaw, who plays Inspector Morse, said "a little bird tells me he is actually in the middle of another book". Thaw began filming yesterday for the "last" episode of Morse, based on Dexter's novel *Death is now my Neighbour*. The two-hour episode, which solves the mystery of Morse's Christian name, Endeavour, will be shown in November.

ADRIAN SHERRATT

Ripe strawberries from glasshouses near Colchester, Essex, ready for the market

Hot weather speeds strawberry crop

By Michael Hornsby, Agriculture Correspondent

THE first British strawberries may be in the shops within two weeks, a full month earlier than usual, thanks to the warm spring.

Growers expect one of the biggest and earliest crops in recent years. They say the strong sunlight should enhance the volume and flavour of the strawberries.

Bill Hamilton, director of public affairs at the Safeway supermarket chain, said: "We expect to see some very competitive pricing. About the only thing that could go wrong now would be late frost at the end of this month or early in May." Price should be well below the level of £1.49 reached at the height of seasonal demand last year.

The National Summer Fruits Association, which accounts for 80 per cent of the home-grown soft and stone fruit supplied to supermarkets, is hoping to deliver 14,000 tons of strawberries, 40 per cent up on last year. Raspberries are expected to yield about 1,500 tons, 50 per cent more than last year.

The warm weather is not the only reason for good strawberry performance. Farmers are protecting a bigger acreage of strawberries with polythene tunnels that speed growth by keeping the soil warm.

Oliver Goacher expects to start picking tunnel-grown fruit before the end of this month at the family farm at North Wheatley, Nottinghamshire. "Early May is the usual time to start harvesting the tunnel fruit", he said. "I cannot remember ever beginning before the end of April."

Alastair Brooks, a director of Kentish Garden Ltd, Britain's biggest soft fruit co-operative, said he expected to be picking his first strawberries a month earlier than last year at his farm near Tonbridge in Kent.

Even glasshouse growers, who always expect to start harvesting in April, have been surprised by how early the crop is. Peter Wensak, who grows more than 10 per cent of Britain's glasshouse crop at Pole House Nurseries at Lawford in Essex, said: "We began harvesting in the first week of April, two weeks earlier than in 1996, and should be finished by early May. Sugar levels look superb."

Forecast, page 24

THE SUNDAY TIMES

Tony Blair interview

"He is certainly cool and charming, but is he ruthless enough to make a difference?"

Lesley White meets Tony Blair

PLUS

Election 97 Reader Forum

Readers of The Times and The Sunday Times have the chance to meet Tony Blair and ask him about Labour's plans for government at a special forum in central London next Friday. See tomorrow's Sunday Times for booking details

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Escaped murderer appears in court

By A Staff Reporter

ALAN REEVE, who has killed three people and escaped from Broadmoor top security hospital 16 years ago, appeared before magistrates yesterday after being extradited from the Irish Republic.

Reeve, 49, was being held in Broadmoor indefinitely for killing his friend Roger Jackson when they were both 15. He was arrested two weeks ago in Cork, where he had been living with his fiancée.

Reeve, who on Thursday lost his last-minute appeal in the Irish High Court against extradition, arrived at Bracknell Magistrates' Court from Heathrow under heavy police escort for the five-minute hearing. He was formally identified and handed over to the custody of the Thames Valley Police.

Reeve was re-arrested on warrants relating to the murder of Roger Jackson and the killing of a fellow patient in Broadmoor when he was 19. A year after his escape he shot dead a policeman in Amsterdam and served ten years in jail.

Police said Reeve was unlikely to face charges over his escape from Broadmoor.

Glasgow prepares for 'Mag Dog' McCafferty after 23 years spent in Australian prison

Triple killer to be deported to Britain after parole victory

From Roger Maynard in Sydney and Shirley English

A TRIPLE murderer granted parole yesterday after 23 years in an Australian jail is almost certain to be deported to his home city, Glasgow, in the next few weeks.

Archie "Mad Dog" McCafferty, who emigrated to Australia with his family when he was ten, led a gang that carried out three random "thrill kill" murders in Sydney in 1973. He had vowed to kill seven times and, while in Parramatta prison, where he was serving three life sentences, was convicted of the manslaughter of another man.

McCafferty is to appeal against the Department of Immigration deportation order but Australian and British officials say he will almost certainly fail because he never applied for Australian citizenship.

McCafferty, 49, will be effectively a free man when he returns to Britain after his release, set for sometime between April 28 and May 8. Glasgow council issued a brief statement yesterday confirming that it was "statutorily obliged" to provide him with guidance and support, including accommodation, for up to a year if he requested it.

Cox: her father was one of McCafferty's victims

McCafferty's release followed an impassioned plea for his freedom before the New South Wales Parole Board in Sydney. Facing relatives of the three men he murdered, he appealed for their forgiveness for what he called "this horrific crime". "I realise the chaos and trauma I have created in the families of the three victims. I can't undo what I have done but I sincerely apologise from the bottom of my heart."

McCafferty killed the men over five days in a drug-induced frenzy after claiming the voice of his dead six-week-old son, Craig, had told him he would be reincarnated if he killed seven times. Yesterday he insisted he was not the same man. "I am a changed man and I deserve a second chance of life," he told his victims' relatives. "I am an older man and I am not a psychopathic killer. To keep me in jail and to keep your hatred in your heart will destroy you too."

Des Ward, the parole board chairman, said psychiatric reports indicated McCafferty no longer suffered from delusions or any other mental illness. "I see no reason why he should not be considered for release."

It was a view the relatives did not share. Outside the court Lesley Cox, whose father Ronald was murdered by McCafferty in the same graveyard where his son was buried, hurled abuse at him as he was led away. "You mongrel, you should rot in hell," she shouted as he entered a waiting prison van.

Mrs Cox, 37, said she felt devastated and betrayed. "I don't believe he has any remorse for what he's done, he's just played with the system."

Archie McCafferty being led away from court in Sydney yesterday as relatives of his victims hurl abuse

She said she was also worried for the people of Scotland if McCafferty was made to return. "I feel very frightened, scared and terrified that this man might end up over there."

As a British citizen, McCafferty can live wherever he chooses in Britain but is thought likely to return to Glasgow. Neighbours will not be informed about his past and the state will have no power to enforce Australian parole rulings.

The Glasgow council statement said: "We have assigned social workers to meet Mr McCafferty should he need assistance and have made arrangements to provide support, including accommodation. Access to medical services can be arranged if required." It went on: "The council cannot release further information about any contact with Mr McCafferty because we cannot discuss details of individual cases or identify clients without their permission."

The New South Wales Attorney General's office has eight days to lodge an appeal against McCafferty's release, but such action is considered unlikely. The Administrative Appeals Tribunal will decide on his appeal in the next few weeks.

McCafferty made it clear at yesterday's hearing that he wanted to remain in Australia. He said he had been offered three full-time jobs and had somewhere to live.

However Philip Ruddock, Australia's Immigration Minister, confirming that he would not be allowed to stay, said: "We would expect at the point in time when he is released from detention that the [deportation] order should be carried out."

Philip Morrice, Britain's Consul-General, said in a statement read outside the court: "McCafferty is a British citizen and not Australian. We therefore understand and accept the Australian Government's decision to deport him."

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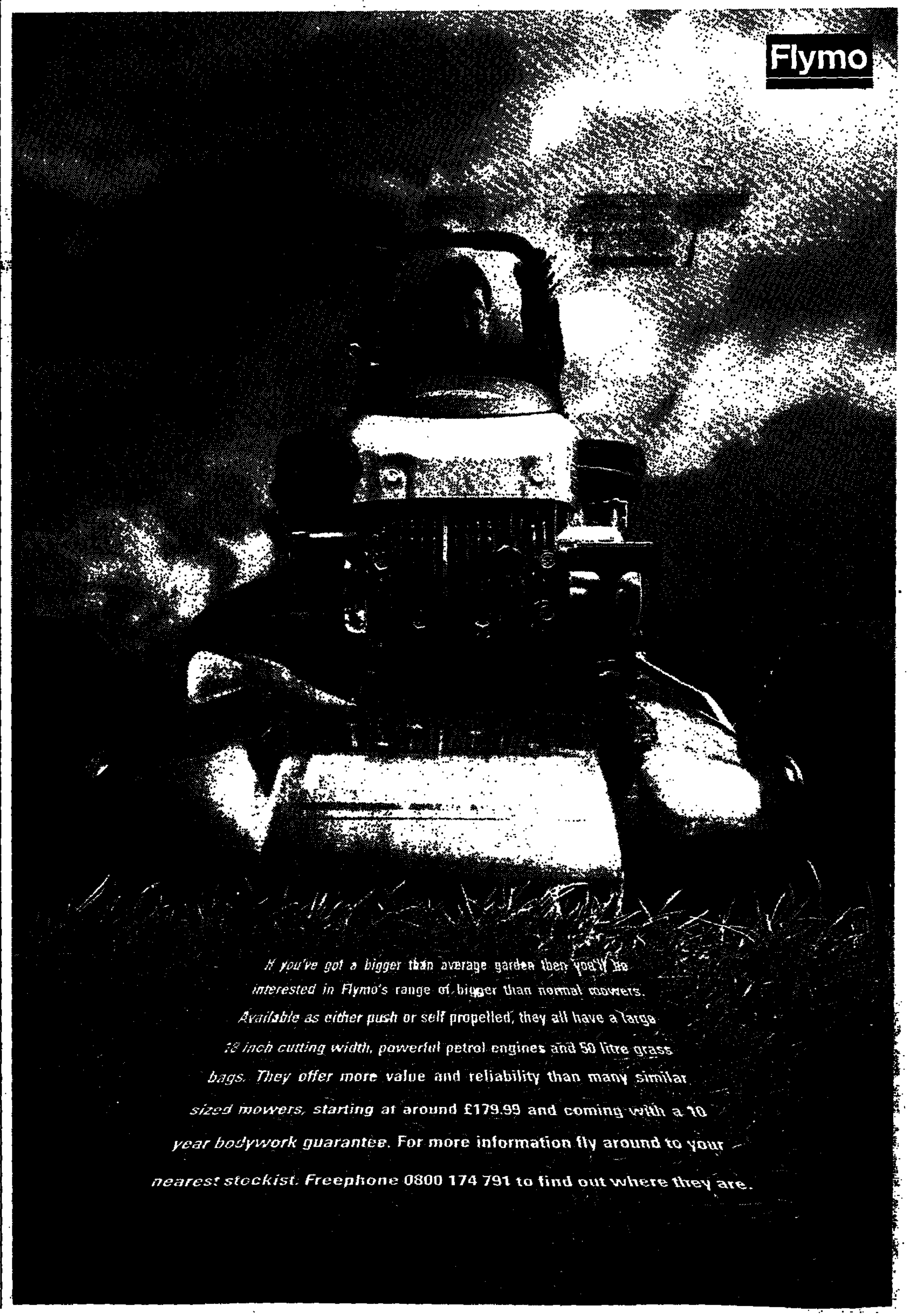

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Credo

Heed the prophetic voice in politics

Brian Mountford

When Christians try to contribute to the election debate they are often accused of political bias, naivety, or vapid cliché.

But the churches are involved in the political life of the nation by having a pastoral ministry in all levels of society, and specialist ministries in schools, universities, hospitals, prisons, the Armed Forces and many social agencies. Moreover, practical Christian action, such as running drop-in centres for the homeless, recreation centres for teenagers, church schools and aid projects in the Third World, makes an actual political difference.

When it comes to particular policies, however, Christians often disagree with one another on quite legitimate theological grounds. We have never found a watertight way of piping the teachings of the Bible and Christian tradition into a specific manifesto.

But that does not invalidate the *prophetic* voice of Christianity. Prophecy, in this context, is about providing a spiritual critique of contemporary secular activities. Modern Christians would claim that the life of Jesus Christ sums up the essence of God's values and that His teachings and example provide an ideal for human behaviour.

The text that ruffles so many political manifestos is Jesus's insistence that you have to lose your life to save it. This is a way of asking how much one cares about people other than oneself. It is exemplified by Jesus on the Cross when He forgives His torturers and attends to the needs of the penitent thief hanging beside Him.

Then there is Paul's list of the "Fruits of the Spirit" — love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Paul recognises that the paradox of physical life is that the values that bring lasting meaning and significance are non-material ones.

The cynic will ridicule this as a banal evocation of niceness with little practical import, but he would be wrong. Prophecy is intended to make civic leaders and politicians think again.

☐ *The Rev Brian Mountford is Vicar of the University Church of St Mary the Virgin, Oxford. His book* Postcards on the Way to Heaven *(£9.99) was published last month by SPCK.*

For better or worse, Church to change rules on marriage

BY RUTH GLEDHILL, RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

THE Church of England, faced with increased competition to conduct weddings, is examining all aspects of its marriage law and practice. But many believe that change will come too late to save the church white wedding.

Since the 1994 Marriage Act, which came into force in 1995, an increasing number of couples have abandoned the Church or the dingy atmosphere of the register office for locations as offbeat as the Blackpool Tower, the Eurostar waiting room, castles or open fields.

Church leaders are also being forced to respond to the rise in cohabitation and divorce. Large numbers of couples resent having to jump through the hoops and endure the formalities of a church ceremony and opt instead for a civil wedding, or choose simply to live together.

In 1993 the number of church weddings fell by 11,000 to 91,000, out of a total of 283,000 marriages in England. The 1994 figures, out next month, could show a further fall but the biggest drop is expected to have come in 1995, after the Marriage Act came into effect.

Clergy are concerned that, as it becomes easier and cheaper to marry outside a church, with an all-in-one ceremony and reception, more couples will tie the knot without any religious input to the ceremony.

Already the Church's General Synod has decided to abolish the traditional banns of marriage after they were condemned as a "medieval anachronism". Church authorities have delayed the process of abolition but not because they are having second thoughts. They want to present a package to Parliament in the next three years which is expected to include removing the need for banns to be read in church, changing the hours when weddings can take place, addressing the question of residence and making it easier for non-Anglicans to marry in church.

The bishops are also tackling the widespread confusion over the remarriage of divorcees. Many couples hoping to make the trek to the altar find it baffling that while a divorced person can now be ordained to the priesthood, a divorced man or woman cannot under Church of England law be remarried in church if a former partner is still living. To add to the confusion, such marriages may take place under secular law. This has given rise to a wide variety of practice throughout the Church's 43 dioceses.

A divorcee's chance of a church wedding depends purely on where they live, how flexible the local vicar is prepared to be and whether he or she sticks more rigidly to Church or secular law.

A working party chaired by the Right Rev Michael Scott-Joynt, the Bishop of Winchester, has met three times to examine how the Church might change its approach to remarriage after divorce. It is due to report back to the house of bishops at the end of this year and is thought likely to recommend that remarriage in church should be sanctioned in some circumstances. Such a change would pave the way for the Prince of Wales, who will one day become the Church's supreme governor, to remarry in a London cathedral should he wish.

Bishop Scott-Joynt said: "Our task is to explore the situation and the circumstances that have led to it and to see whether we can make recommendations to resolve what is agreed generally to be an unsatisfactory situation."

Bishop of Rochester, page 20

Christopher Barton and Lindsey Mathews, who wed on a bridge over the M61

Couples take centre stage

BY RICHARD DUCE AND RUTH GLEDHILL

COUPLES may soon tread the boards at a West End theatre under plans to license the building for weddings. The Old Vic is the first of the London West End theatres to consider supplementing income by making use of the premises during daylight hours when bar and catering facilities stand idle.

It will join 1,500 venues, ranging from the romantic to the bizarre, licensed for weddings under the 1994 Marriage Act, which came into effect in 1995. Churches and register offices are feeling the pinch as couples marry anywhere from Brighton Pavilion to Stoke City football club, a James Bond theme pub in Nuneaton, Warwickshire, a 100 ft roller coaster ride in Yorkshire, or even on the set of *Coronation Street* in Manchester.

The only requirements are that venues are secular and open to the public, the latter to allow objection on grounds of "just cause of impediment", such as bigamy or consanguinuity. Venues already licensed in London include Alexandra Palace, Claridge's, the old library at Dulwich College, the Roof Gardens in Kensington High Street, Cambridge Cottage (former home of Dukes of Cambridge, at Kew Gardens), London Zoo, the riverside Trafalgar Tavern and the Savoy.

Andrew Leigh, the Old Vic general manager, said that couples could be charged £100 for being married on stage by the Lambeth council registrar. However Richmond Theatre in southwest London, which was licensed last year to hold weddings, charges £500 to hire the auditorium.

Hotel subterfuge outwits parish law

BY PAUL KELBIE

A MAN, a suitcase and a furtive arrangement with the landlord of a country hotel would seem more appropriate to securing a divorce than a wedding, unless you are circumventing the fine print of the Anglican Church.

Ancient rules and regulations preventing parish priests from marrying anyone outside their domain in England or Wales without a special licence from the Archbishop of Canterbury has done little to keep the Church in tune with modern living.

For more than three hundred years my wife's family has lived and worked in North Wales, so it was with some significance that for our own wedding we chose a village church in the middle of a large farming community.

My wife decided she wanted to marry there because her parents, sister, cousins, aunts and uncles still live in the neighbourhood although no longer within the parish boundaries. In addition, the vicar is a close friend.

Ignoring advice from friends who had overcome similar problems with the church authorities and simply lied about their addresses, I wrote to Lambeth Palace seeking permission for us to marry in our chosen parish. We were turned down on the ground that 300 years of family history, personal friendship and sentimentality were not good enough reasons alone.

It was then that the vicar suggested a "little white lie". To be eligible to marry in the church either the groom or bride has to be resident in the parish for at least three weeks.

Acting on his suggestion I booked into the local hotel for a few days and, with the permission of the hotelier, established a permanent residence by leaving my suitcase and some belongings behind. I made sure I stayed at the hotel on subsequent visits to secure the wedding arrangements.

After some time I was then eligible to apply to the vicar as a resident of the parish and swear that the hotel was my usual place of abode when in the parish, which it is.

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ELECTION 97

POLL DAY
-12

A 14-year-old chip off Nye Bevan's block
Valerie Elliott - page 13

I'm betting my shirt on this...
Paddy Ashdown in an interview with THE TIMES
– page 14

'Order, order' she shouts happily to the voters
Madam Speaker goes canvassing
- page 10

Europeans bemused by Kohl poster

Caricatures of foreign leaders are nothing new, **Charles Bremner** reports, but they have featured enemies more often than allies

"CAN you imagine Chancellor Kohl's party putting out a poster of John Major with a German politician on his knee?" The unthinkable image, invoked by a German official, prompted chortles at the European Commission yesterday as Eurocrats reacted with near disbelief to the Tory advertisement featuring Tony Blair on the lap of the German leader.

According to the canons of diplomatic correctness, the caricaturing in such a manner of a foreign leader, let alone that of Europe's "senior partner", is simply not done. "It is a sign that things must be pretty desperate in England if they have to resort to that," a French diplomat said. In Brussels, a British European Union official spluttered: "It is quite ghastly."

Elmar Brok, a senior German member of the European Parliament, said the Tory posters were "pitiful". "We should be partners with Britain ... not fighting a battle," said Herr Brok, a member of Herr Kohl's Christian Democratic party.

There was little use pointing out that the poster is not really an insult because it portrays Herr Kohl as a giant alongside a puny Labour leader. The Germans are only too aware that they are viewed in Britain and elsewhere as the potential ogres of a federal Europe.

Irreverent likenesses of leaders have been used for centuries. As a political weapon they have proved especially effective in belittling enemies and rallying sentiment aginst foreign threats.

Britain has a robust record in the field, from the anti-French cartoons of Hogarth and the later renderings of Old Boney in the Napoleonic wars, to the demonisation of Presidents Galtieri of Argentina and Saddam Hussein of Iraq. In wartime, propagandists have weighed in with such things as the image of a rapacious and bloodstained Kaiser Wilhelm in the First World War. In the Second World War, British propagandists had a field day with images of Hitler, Mussolini, Emperor Hirohito and their henchmen.

By the crude standards of such stuff, the Tories' picture of Mr Blair on an inflated Herr Kohl is small beer. The shock to diplomatic sensibilities comes from the way that Conservative Central Office is using the technique against the leader of a close ally which also happens to be the country with the thinnest of skins. So sensitive is the German establishment to the country's image, that they have staged learned conferences to analyse the reasons behind the polls that show their country to be one of the least loved on earth.

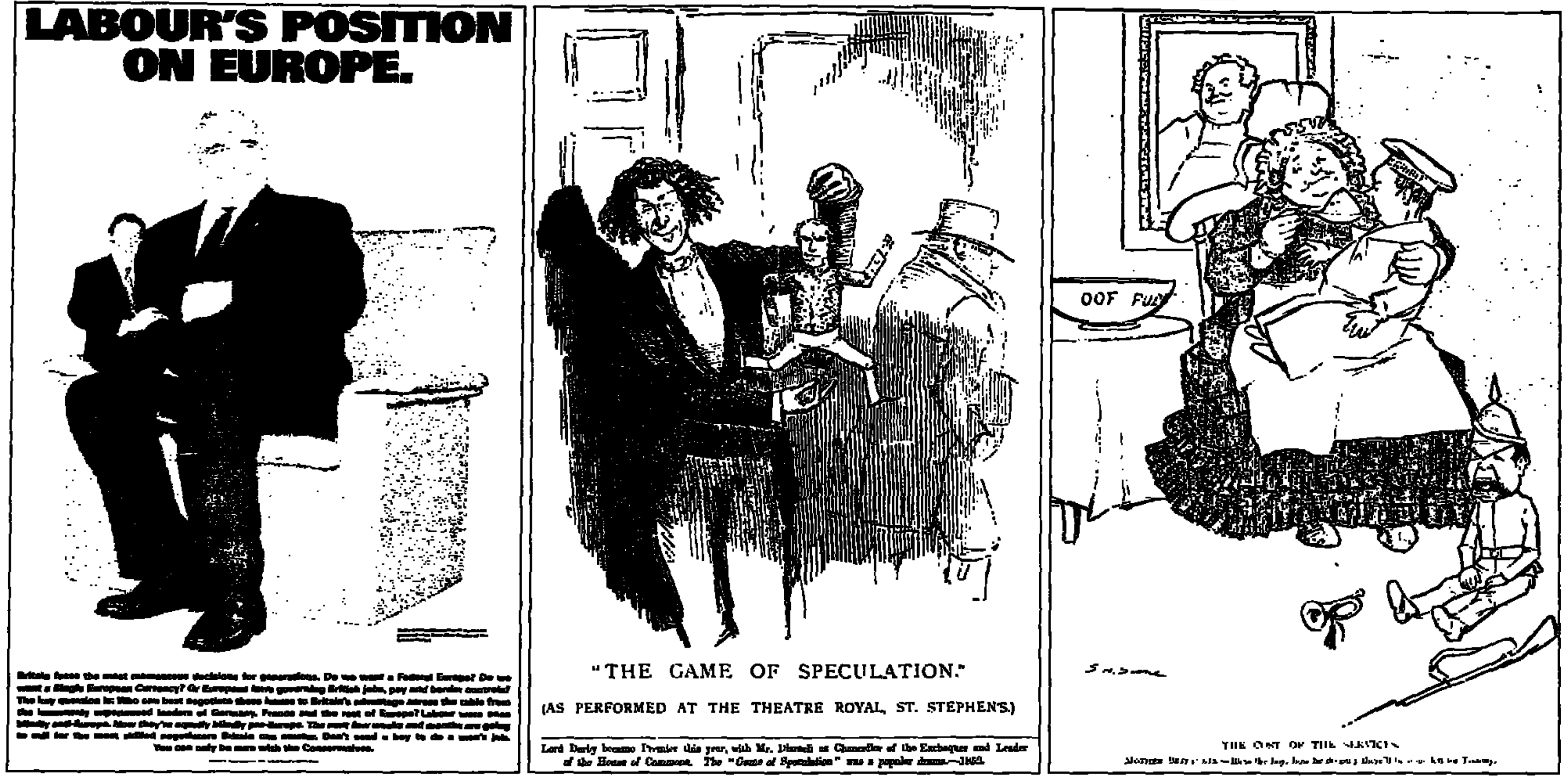
In peacetime, governments, or their ruling parties, are not supposed to brandish foreign bogeymen. In the campaign for the French referendum on the Maastricht treaty in 1992, the Socialist Party was rapped over the knuckles by President Mitterrand, its master, when it used a cartoon Goth as well as a stereotype American to appeal on posters for a "yes" vote. The implied message was "Sign up for Maastricht and monetary union and the Germans won't invade us again".

Even the Soviet Union stayed clear of caricaturing world leaders. According to the old Kremlin rules, the official cartoonists could skewer such minor league right-wing villains as Chile's General Pinochet, but they had to lay off American presidents. Instead, they had to make do with cartoons of Uncle Sam.

Soviet embarrassment was evident when Maragaret Thatcher won the 1979 election because the official cartoonists had caricatured her while Opposition leader, inventing her celebrated image as the Iron Lady in a suit of armour. The caricatures stopped when she became Prime Minister, although she would reappear occasionally as a witch on a broomstick after one of her anti-Soviet outings.

Although, the Conservatives' German caricature breaks new ground, there is nothing original in the message. The puppet or the ventriloquist's dummy has been used in various forms at least since the run-up to the French Revolution.

Nazi propaganda, for instance, made much of stereotype Jewish bankers with President Roosevelt and Winston Churchill sitting on their knees. Similar pictures still appear in the organs of Jean-Marie Le Pen's far-right National Front in France.



"THE GAME OF SPECULATION."
(AS PERFORMED AT THE THEATRE ROYAL, ST. STEPHEN'S.)

Lord Derby became Premier this year, with Mr. Disraeli as Chancellor of the Exchequer and Leader of the House of Commons. The "Game of Speculation" was a popular drama.—1852.

THE COST OF THE SERVICES

Helmut Kohl and his "dummy" Tony Blair in the Tory poster, with earlier efforts at the genre featuring, centre, Disraeli and, right, "Mother Britannia" and the kaiser

'It's amazing how important the British think we Germans are'

Oliver August and **Daniel McGrory** find that an Englishman is more worried about the effect of the Conservatives' Kohl poster than the Chancellor's countrymen

MOST Germans living in Britain reacted with amused tolerance yesterday to the sight of their Chancellor being used in the latest campaign stunt by the Tories.

Pastor Volkmar Latossek of the German Lutheran Church said: "I thought it was quite a funny joke to show Tony Blair as a ventriloquist's dummy to Helmut Kohl. I didn't take it seriously and I am sure most Germans won't.

"What never ceases to amaze us, though, is how important the British think we are. We are famed for not having a sense of humour but the Germans do not take themselves as seriously as the British."

A close associate of Chancellor Kohl believes he may take offence at the advertisement. David Marsh, the European strategy director at Flemings Investment Bank, and an expert on Germany, said: "I spoke to Helmut Kohl at some length at the Hanover trade fair this week. He is very sensitive to how Germany is depicted in the British press.

"It is grotesque of John Major to pretend to get on well with Kohl at summits while as the Tory leader he authorises such low grade advertising. I don't know what the effect on the British election campaign will be, but it will have a negative effect on the Bonn Government with which Britain needs to do business."

The London bureau of the German television network, ARD, was amused by the advert. A spokesman said: "None of our bosses in Bonn seem to care too much about it. They are afraid of being seen to interfere in a British election so certainly don't want to start a fuss." The consensus among those working at the network was that Mr Major is too much of a gentleman to have concocted this idea. "We think it was the desperate men around him in Central Office".

Newspaper editorials in Germany did attack Mr Major for what was largely regarded as a misguided advertisement.

Süddeutsche Zeitung, a leading newspaper published in Munich, comments this morning: "When John from London next meets his friend Helmut from Bonn, he will take him to one side and tell him it wasn't meant the way it appeared.

"Helmut won't need a translator on this occasion and, unusually for him, speak English. He will tell John, who won't be his friend any more, that he is a Little Englander and that he failed in the context of European history.

"That's the way it could be — but it won't. Helmut won't see John at the Amsterdam summit because John won't be Prime Minister by any more."

Tory advert signals surrender

PETER RIDDELL

THE Tories obviously no longer believe that they will still be in office after the election. No politician who seriously thinks he will be attending the Amsterdam summit in June would have authorised the latest Tory advertisement featuring a small Tony Blair sitting on a giant Helmut Kohl's knee.

If Britain really wants to negotiate at the summit, rather than just to posture, any government will need allies. But the Tories no longer seem interested in building alliances abroad, only in appealing to the crudest anti-German prejudices. The new advert will only antagonise other countries whose support Britain needs. No wonder leading Tory pro-Europeans are so furious, and depressed.

The crassness of the advert contrasts with the measured way in which Mr Major spoke on Wednesday about the need to keep open options on a single currency. This was an impressive performance. As Douglas Hurd argued then, it makes sense not to rule out participation for ever, as so many Tory candidates are eager to do now, since no one can know what the impact on Britain would be if a monetary union went ahead without sterling.

The most likely scenario is that Germany and France will launch a core monetary union in 1999, or shortly afterwards, without Britain. If this succeeds, and within a couple of years the City of London is seen to be losing out and inward investment is falling, there will be strong pressure from business to join. But that possibility is denied by the Tory absolutists.

Of course, Labour's approach to Europe is open to question, and Mr Blair is untested as a negotiator. Mr Blair is relying on a change of attitudes in other countries, an abandonment of the old Delors vision of a social Europe and an acceptance of the need to avoid adding to business costs via new regulations. The arrival of a Labour government might lead to a revived attempt to broaden the scope of the social chapter. But the Tories exaggerate the danger not only in the personally offensive nature of the Tory advert but also in claiming that Labour is now "blindly pro-Europe" and would give in to the unions.

On several key issues facing the Amsterdam summit, the Tory and Labour approaches are broadly similar: opposing Franco-German proposals that would bring defence within the European Union and favouring a continuation of inter-governmental co-operation on foreign, immigration and justice issues. A Blair Britain would not be in the inner core of a so-called federal Europe.

Indeed, Labour has itself veered in a sceptic direction during the campaign — not just in the nationalist rhetoric of Mr Blair's article which secured the support of *The Sun* but also in the party's ridiculously jingoistic election broadcast featuring a bulldog. Labour often talks about offering a lead on Europe, but has failed to do so for fear of supposedly alienating voters who previously supported the Tories.

Mr Major said on Wednesday that he was putting the national interest ahead of party interest. Yesterday's advert put the party interest first. There is no way this approach can advance Britain's interests in Europe. It is an act of desperation that has debased political debate.

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Betty Boothroyd enjoys opponents' support in an 'oasis of sanity and civilization'

One-woman show gives politics a miss

Ben Macintyre meets Madam Speaker, who has few complaints about missing the 'cut and thrust of a good fight' in in West Bromwich West

LOST in the outskirts of Birmingham on my way to find Betty Boothroyd on the first day of her campaign for re-election, I called the "Friends of the Speaker" headquarters in Oldbury for directions.

"It's a piece of cake," said the cheery northern voice of the woman who answered. "Aim for the council office, a thing that looks like a great big pagoda, then turn right." I thanked her and asked her name — it is always useful to have a contact among the campaign workers.

"This is Betty," came the reply.

Miss Boothroyd's campaign is, in more ways than one, a one-woman show — all singing, all dancing and no real politics. For Madam Speaker, in a revival of the ancient tradition that lapsed in the 1960s, is running unopposed by the major parties. More than that, the country's most popular parliamentarian is being supported by Conservatives and Liberal Democrats as well as her own Labour activists in West Bromwich West.

The former professional dancer was required to renounce party affiliations when she became Britain's first woman speaker in 1992. Thus her campaign is a world away from the acrid politicking to be found across the rest of the country.

In her own words, the constituency where she has a nominal majority of nearly 8,000 is "an oasis of sanity and civilization". Her only opponents are a candidate from the National Democrats (formerly the National Front) and another claiming to represent the Official Labour Party who has, Madam Speaker observes, no link whatsoever with the party of Tony Blair. Seldom have two deposits been more hopelessly squandered. "I call them my 'ballot paper tigers'," she giggles.

The woman whose day job involves telling MPs to mind their language must carefully watch her own to avoid the merest hint of political bias. Even her outfit is a statement of political neutrality, a suit in startling House of Commons green. "I would have liked to campaign in the colours of West Bromwich Albion, but that's blue."

Miss Boothroyd's start in politics was as difficult and stressful as her present campaign at the age of 67, her 12th to date, is uncomplicated and relaxing. Having begun her career as a House of Commons secretary, she fought and lost four elections for Labour before finally entering the Commons in 1973.

"Of course I miss the cut and thrust of a good election fight," says the unmarried only daughter of Yorkshire textile workers. Many an MP has felt the hot gust of Miss Boothroyd's wrath, when the merry barmaid transforms herself into a flogging headmistress, but no scintilla of that will cloud this campaign. She is the mother hen contentedly roosting at the top of the coop, proudly watching her chicks as they peck each other to shreds in the farmyard below.

If Miss Boothroyd's constituents object to being, in effect, deprived of their democratic voting rights, few are prepared to say so, for in West Bromwich West she is widely seen as an unassailable mascot, queen mother of the Mother of Parliaments.

"They may get better representation than if I was a backbencher. Ministers tend to give me a little priority," she understates. "They come to me."

Opinion polls indicate that if Britain were to become a republic, Miss Boothroyd would be hot favourite to become head of state, and her stately progress around her constituency in the coming days will be almost regal in its intense neutrality and studied avoidance of controversy: anglers' clubs, old folks' homes, museums. "I'm even going to the Conservative Club. Never been there before," she observes.

Unveiling a plaque at Feneseal, a factory that makes window sealants, "Our Betty" is enthusiastically applauded by more than 100 workers dressed in identical yellow T-shirts. "Order, Order," she shouts happily, like a mobile evergreen shrub wandering through a host of daffodils.

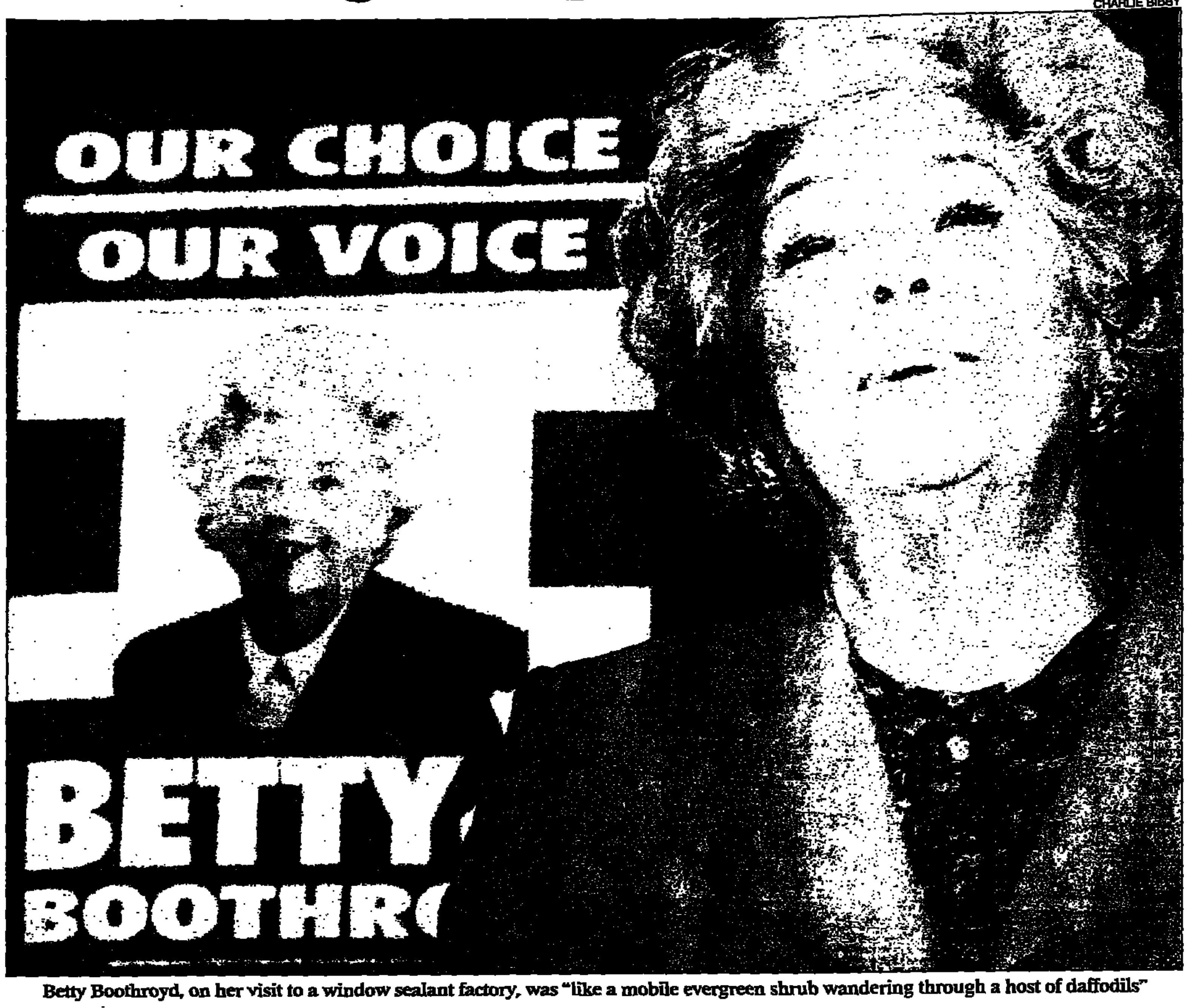
The embodiment of British democracy, usually to be found in black and white robes with gold braid trimmings, takes her informality seriously when on the stump. Earlier she had confessed that she had no idea what to put in her speech to the Feneseal workers.

"What about saying you are the double-glazing on the parliamentary system, keeping out the drafts and reducing the noise," I suggested.

"Great, let me get that down. Most of the speeches I have to do now are so boring," she said, reaching for a note pad and scribbling in a bizarre role reversal.

She tells her audience: "With a little bit of luck I shall be returned as parliamentary Speaker." It is her only reference to a unique election process in which luck, as well as most other normal electoral considerations, is playing precious little part.

As we sat in her empty and tranquil office, working on this non-campaign speech for a pre-ordained election, Miss Boothroyd produced two packets of cigarettes, Benson & Hedges and Rothman's. Her impartiality is so ingrained that, momentarily, Madam Speaker seemed uncertain which brand to smoke first. Finally she opted for a B & H, but I felt quite certain that her next smoke would be a Rothman's, then another B & H. . .



CHARLIE BIBBY

Betty Boothroyd, on her visit to a window sealant factory, was "like a mobile evergreen shrub wandering through a host of daffodils"

US-style district attorneys proposed

By Jill Sherman

JACK STRAW announced Labour plans yesterday to introduce chief Crown prosecutors in each police area as part of efforts to ensure that more criminals are convicted.

The Shadow Home Secretary said the plans for a locally based prosecution would be similar to the system in the United States where there was a district attorney personally responsible in each area. "In our system there will be a named, known, accountable and answerable chief crown prosecutor."

There would also be an independent review of the structures and procedures of the Crown Prosecution Service within the first year of a Labour government to cut bureaucracy and improve liaison between the service and victims and witnesses, Mr Straw said. "The service is over-centralised, inefficient and the morale of the staff is at an all-time low."

He said: "Nothing better illuminates the Conservatives' failure on crime than the now yawning gap between the number of crimes committed and the number of criminals convicted by the courts. Since 1980, crime has doubled but convictions have fallen by a third." In 1980, convictions were equivalent to 17 per cent of recorded crime, but by 1995 this had dropped to 6 per cent.

"Time after time, victims and their families face the trauma of being told that cases have been dropped or that charges have been reduced by the CPS. More than a fifth of all cases are now discontinued or written off." Meanwhile, the CPS had also failed to weed out weak cases coming to court, he said. "It is time for swift action to reform the Crown Prosecution Service to ensure that it works more effectively with the police, takes greater account of the impact of its decisions on victims and brings more offenders to justice."

The Liberal Democrats announced proposals yesterday to combat juvenile crime by a combination of measures, such as anti-truancy measures, and effective punishment for more persistent offenders, including more use of non-custodial sentences.

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Hurd and Hattersley head Major's list of 21 new peers

BY JILL SHERMAN

Hurd

Steel

Molyneaux

Baker

Hattersley

Mayhew

DOUGLAS HURD, the former Foreign Secretary, and Roy Hattersley, deputy Labour leader at the last general election, head a list of 21 retiring MPs who are to be made life peers, it was announced last night.

Sir Patrick Mayhew, Northern Ireland Secretary, and Kenneth Baker, former Home Secretary, are among ten Conservatives, seven Labour, three Liberal Democrats and one Ulster Unionist to enter the House of Lords.

The unexpected list was drawn up by John Major in advance of the Dissolution or Resignation List of honours, expected next month, because so many MPs are quitting. It allows the Prime Minister two chances to increase the Tories' majority in the Lords, threatened by Labour's plan to remove voting rights of hereditary peers. The list contains a number of Labour MPs who retired at the last minute allowing the Labour leadership to impose a shortlist of candidates. These include Douglas Hoyle, parliamentary party chairman, Sir Geoffrey Lofthouse, deputy Speaker and John Evans, former party chairman.

Labour sources last night vehemently denied that the former MPs had been rewarded with peerages to allow favoured candidates to stand. "If Mr Hoyle, Sir Geoffrey and Mr Evans had announced two years ago that they were going to retire then they would have gone to the House of Lords," a spokesman said.

Five other former Tory Cabinet ministers were on yesterday's list — John Biffen, Paul Channon, David Howell, Michael Jopling and John Patten — and two former Chief Whips, Richard Ryder and Tim Renton.

The other new Labour peers include Peter Shore, a former Cabinet minister, Joan Lestor, former overseas development spokeswoman, who is the only woman on the list, and Don Dixon, former Deputy Chief Whip.

The Opposition List includes Sir David Steel, former Liberal leader, Sir Russell Johnston, David Alton, the anti-abortion campaigner, and Sir James Molyneaux, the former Ulster Unionist leader.

The announcement made by Downing Street is the first time since 1970 that such a disclosure has come during a general election, although it has happened four times since 1945.

Mr Hurd, one of the most senior MPs to forsake the green benches, has held three Cabinet posts over nine years: he was Foreign Secretary, Home Secretary and Northern Ireland Secretary. He also entered the Tory leadership election after Margaret Thatcher stepped down in 1990.

Mr Hattersley, once regarded as the Centre Right of the Labour Party, has become an increasingly irritating thorn in Tony Blair's side, particularly over his attacks on changes in education policy.

The only serving Cabinet minister on the list is Sir Patrick, who is rewarded for his tireless work in trying to reach a peace deal in Northern Ireland. A record number of MPs, including 58 Tories, are standing down, many through disillusionment or because they have been unable to boost their incomes through outside interests. About 28 Labour MPs and six Liberal Democrat MPs have retired.

Leading article, page 21

Goldsmith loses fight for airtime

THE Referendum Party yesterday failed in its attempts to gain more party political broadcasts.

Two High Court judges rejected accusations by Sir James Goldsmith's party that it had been "unfairly and unlawfully" limited to one five-minute broadcast. They dismissed applications for judicial review brought against the BBC and Independent Television Commission, which had upheld ITV decisions not to allocate more air time.

The court had been told that the Referendum Party was "going for government" but being hampered by an "outrageously unfair" denial of air time by the broadcasting authorities.

Lord Justice Auld, sitting with Mr Justice Popplewell, will give their judgment next week.

Drug row columnist in new job

WILL SELF, the writer sacked by *The Observer* after being accused of taking heroin on John Major's campaign jet, has been recruited by a rival newspaper.

The *Independent on Sunday* last night confirmed that the cult novelist had been taken on as a columnist and would give a full account of the affair in his first piece tomorrow. The author, a former heroin addict, was hired by the Editor, Rosie Boycott, who said she had long wanted him to join the paper.

"He is a brilliant writer and has always been totally open about his drug-taking," she said. "He is a very original voice."

Despite his denial of drug abuse aboard Mr Major's plane, Mr Self did not contest the decision by *The Observer* to end his contract.

ELECTION TRAIL

SATURDAY — Conservatives: Michael Howard in Wales, Sir Patrick Mayhew in the Midlands, Roger Freeman in the West, Gillian Shephard in the North, Sir Nicholas Lyell in the North West. **Labour:** Tony Blair in London and the South East, John Prescott in the North, Gordon Brown, Harriet Harman and John Denham in London, George Robertson and Robin Cook in Scotland, Clare Short in the North East. **Liberal Democrats:** Paddy Ashdown in France to visit his new grandson, Simon Wakefield, Keith Evans and Ruth Parry in Wales.

SUNDAY — Conservatives: No details. **Labour:** John Prescott in the South East. **Liberal Democrats:** Paddy Ashdown, Menzies Campbell in London.

ON SCREEN — Tony Blair on *Dimbleby*, 1.10pm, ITV; Paddy Ashdown on *Breakfast with Frost*, 8.30am ITV; Michael Howard, Edward Heath, Margaret Beckett and Ian Greer on *Sunday with Adam Boulton*, 10amSky News; Kenneth Clark, Margaret Beckett and Malcolm Bruce on *On the Record*, 12.30am, BBC1.

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Thatcher supports revolt against single currency

By Andrew Pierce

BARONESS THATCHER gave her support to the Tory grassroots' revolt on Europe yesterday when she rejected John Major's negotiate-and-decide policy on the single currency.

The former Prime Minister, who had so far deliberately refrained from answering questions on Europe, relented on the campaign trail in Essex yesterday. Asked whether Britain should enter the single European currency, she replied: "Good heavens. No! I was the one who invented the answer: No. No. NO!"

Her intervention came as it emerged that only 25 or so Tory candidates in Conservative-held seats, excluding ministers, have rejected financial support from the millionaire Paul Sykes. Some 227 have received help ranging between £1,000 and £3,000. The scale of the revolt is underlined by the fact that the Tories are defending 336 seats with 90 being defended by ministers who are barred from ruling out a single currency.

Conservative Central Office, which had been hoping that Lady Thatcher would stay silent on the subject, attempted to play down her remarks last night. "Lady Thatcher is fighting an energetic campaign to ensure John Major wins the election," an official said. A spokeswoman for Lady Thatcher said: "It was not a slip of the tongue. She was stating her deeply held views on a single currency."

Lady Thatcher's remarks were made during a visit to Maldon, Essex, being defended by John Whittingdale, her former political secretary, who is an ally of Michael Portillo, the Defence Secretary.

They were seized on by John Prescott, the deputy Labour leader, who said: "No sooner has John Major recruited Baroness Thatcher to his campaign than she adds to the deep-seated divisions in the Tory party. She made it clear that, whatever he says, she says something different. She's obviously fed up with his U-turns and his equivocations and, like the rest of the country, with his weak leadership."

John Redwood backed Lady Thatcher's right to speak out. "It is the quote of the day. Maggie was magnificent. She recongises that it would be a massive transfer of democracy and would fight it."

Mr Sykes dismissed the charge that he had been disloyal by funding candidates prepared to flout the party policy. He has made a donation to Central Office to help pay for its poster campaign. Leading Tories on the list of 25, who have not signed-up, include Edwina Currie, Sir Edward Heath, and Hugh Dykes, chairman of the British Parliamentary Group in the House of Commons. "They are part of a tiny rump of Europhobes," Mr Sykes said.

"The argument has swung our way completely. Virtually every Tory MP in the House of Commons after the election will have publicly opposed the single currency. Many more are ministers," he declared.

THE REBELS

A further 59 Tory candidates have declared themselves against a single currency, making a total of 282. The new candidates are:

Sir Andrew Bowden, Brighton Kemptown; Carol Buchanan, Falkirk W; Martin Cleasby, Bassetlaw; John Crosby, Birkenhead; James Fairrie, Dagenham; William Frain-Bell, Banff and Buchan; Dean Godson, Great Grimsby; Edmund Hayward, Carmarthen E and Dinefwr; Mark Izatt, Clydesdale; David Jones, Conwy; Ralph Leishman, Argyll and Bute; Alastair Muir, Glasgow Cathcart; Kevin Newton, Dunfermline W; Malcolm Nicol, Falkirk E; Peter Ramsay, Dumbarton; Jacob Rees-Mogg, Fife Central; Rod Richards, Clywd West; Ian Sewell, Cumbernauld and Kilsyth; Colin Simpson, Glasgow Shettleston; Elizabeth Smith, Edinburgh S; Robert Spink, Castle Point; Michael Stern, Bristol NW; Struan Stevenson, Dumfries; Ewen Stewart, Edinburgh N; Sir Malcolm Thornton, Crosby; David Tortle, Doncaster C; Michael Horsley, Hartlepool; Sir John Gorst, Hendon; Helena Hart, Hornsey and Wood Green; Bill Forrow, Huddersfield; David Lee, Hull North; Ed Young, Leigh; Chris Heaton-Harris, Leicester S; Tom Kerr, Linlithgow; Christopher Gill, Ludlow; Dame Peggy Fenner, Medway; Anne Harper, Midlothian; Sir Mark Lennox-Boyd, Morecambe and Lunesdale; Richard Benyon, Newbury; Henry Bellingham, North West Norfolk; Nigel Linacre, N Cornwall; Alan Hogarth, Ochil; Kenneth Brookes, Paisley N; Peter Bone, Pudsey; Andy Ashworth, Staffs Moorlands; Sir Patrick Cormack, Staffs S; David Sharpe, Strathkelvin; Neil Jones, Stoke Central; Guy Opperman, Swindon N; James Hutchings, Tooting; Anthony Steen, Totnes; Archie Norman, Tunbridge Wells; Martin Callanan, Tynemouth; Les Leek, Walsall S; Jill Andrew, Walthamstow; Mark Kotecha, Walton; Paul Green, Wansbeck; Brian Matsell, West Bromwich E; Mark McGregor, West Ham.

PETER NICHOLLS

Lady Olga Maitland, who is defending Sutton and Cheam for the Tories

Lady Olga sallies forth to battle

By Michael Evans

LADY Olga Maitland on the campaign trail is a formidable spectacle, remonstrating with any Labour supporter for even considering voting against John Major.

"Carry on", she tells an undecided voter, rather in the manner of a commanding officer dismissing her troops, after a brief chat with the woman. "Jolly good", "good show" and "bravo", she declares when she encounters Conservative supporters.

Everyone in Sutton and Cheam, where Lady Olga is defending a 10,756 majority over the Liberal Democrats, finds her face familiar even if they are not sure why. She has a way of stopping people in their tracks.

Much is made of John Major's Brixton upbringing but Lady Olga has been trying to persuade the Prime Minister, who lived locally as a child, to return to his "real roots" and campaign with her. She explains that he has decided against, because he regards the constituency as a safe Tory seat.

Joke call wins two votes for Major

Julie Brown: refused to believe it was PM

ASHLEY REECE had the last laugh when his girlfriend, Julie Brown, rang him at work to tell him to go to the shops on the way home (Arthur Leathley writes). As the building worker listened to her shopping instructions on his mobile phone, he saw John Major yards away and told Julie he was going to put the Prime Minister on the line.

Mr Major gamely took the telephone from Mr Reece and chatted with Julie, who assumed that her boyfriend was practising one of his practical jokes. Throughout the conversation, Julie, 27, remained convinced that she was still talking to one of Ashley's workmates on a building site in Bolton.

Even when Mr Major insisted that he was the genuine article, the office administrator refused to be convinced.

Only when newspaper photographers descended on her office in Darwen, did Miss Brown realise she really had been talking to the Prime Minister.

"Ashley's always winding me up so I just thought it was a joke," she said. "I didn't take much interest in the conversation because I was sure it was one of his friends. I can't believe that it was actually Mr Major."

The Prime Minister steered clear of politics during the brief conversation, but will doubtless be gratified by the news that both Ashley, 25, and Julie are prepared to vote Conservative in the highly marginal Labour seat of Rossendale and Darwen. In 1992 Labour won by just 120 votes. A few more well-handled joke phone calls could deliver a Conservative majority.

Julie said: "I just wanted Ashley to pick up some balloons for a wedding. It doesn't surprise me that he called Mr Major over. He's always having a joke."

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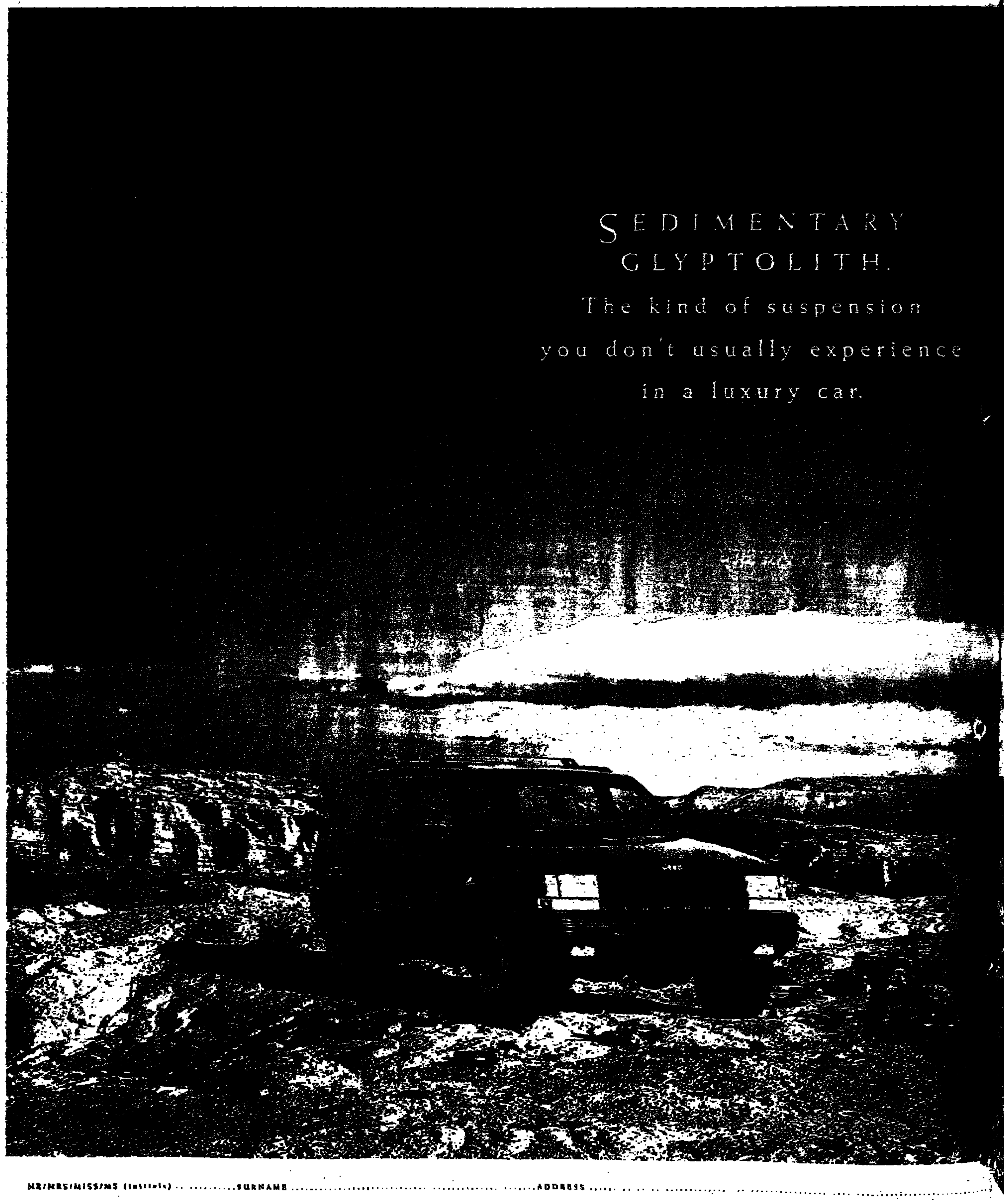

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Valerie Elliott on the young relative of a Labour icon who gave John Prescott a piece of his mind

Bevan boy drops family values to turn Tory

Old Labour: Aneurin Bevan, who started the NHS in 1948

A 14-YEAR-OLD Welsh schoolboy who is related to the Labour radical Aneurin Bevan began his own political career yesterday when he ambushed John Prescott on radio about the launch of new Labour.

Bevan quit Clement Attlee's Cabinet before the 1951 election in protest at the imposition of NHS charges and emerged as the leader of left-wing criticism of the leadership. But Thomas Goodhead was not advocating a return to the left-wing values of his famous relative — Thomas's great-great-grandfather was uncle to the stalwart Labour MP for Ebbw Vale, who was architect of the NHS.

Instead Thomas has broken with family tradition and has set his sights on the leadership of the Tories. He wants to match the record of young William Hague and address the party conference as a teenager.

Thomas, from Rogerstone, near Newport, Gwent, might have to wait two years to become a Tory Party member but yesterday he scored some political points against Labour's deputy leader on BBC Radio 4's *Election Call*. The Conservative Party in Wales last night hailed their young admirer and asked him for lunch with Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, in Cardiff today.

Bespectacled Thomas, who reads *The Economist* and the *Financial Times*, and wants to be a barrister, asked Mr Prescott: "Is the launch of the new Labour Party simply an admission that old-style socialism simply does not work and that Conservative privatisation policies do?" He said old Labour was "simply unelectable" and accused the leadership of having suddenly changed its policies.

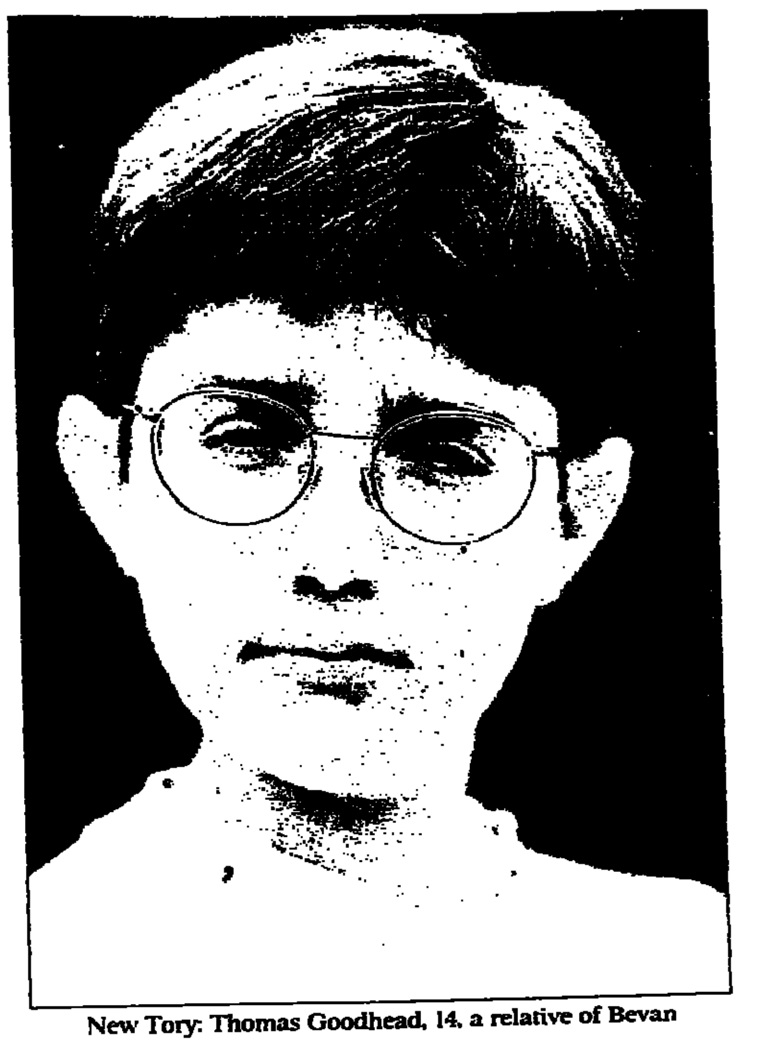
Nursing a broken foot at home, Thomas spotted two days ago that Labour's deputy leader was in the radio hot seat yesterday. He telephoned at 8.10am and was selected to go on air.

Mr Prescott told him a debate had taken place in the Labour Party on Clause Four. "That was led with great courage by Tony Blair. It's not a secret that I was apprehensive about it. But we had that debate and overwhelmingly endorsed by a ballot of all our members to begin a new change. I developed a new form of ideas — a public and private partnership.. That's the change that has taken place. You have traditional values in a modern setting and I'm quite happy with it, apparently so it appears does the electorate."

But after the exchange Thomas was not persuaded by Mr Prescott's answer and said he had ducked the issue. "He didn't answer me honestly and truthfully — he sidestepped the question. I think the change was really because they were unelectable and they have been forced to change to try and hoodwink the British people."

Thomas, a pupil at Bassaleg Comprehensive School, near Newport, said he enjoyed political arguments with his family, particularly his grandfather, who had learned the art of political debate from Bevan.

But there was also plenty of debate with his mother, Pat, a Labour supporter, and his father, David, a Conservative. He liked John Major but disapproved of the party's negative campaigning in the election. He would support William Hague in a future Tory leadership election: "I feel he is a genuine person who wants to make the country better."



New Tory: Thomas Goodhead, 14, a relative of Bevan

It's all perfectly clear, if clearly far from perfect

New Labour or not, for John Prescott clause four still comes first — before clauses one, two and three. But **Peter Barnard** is sure he means what he knows

THE impression that John Prescott is an old Labour cannon liable at any moment to blow holes in the new Labour edifice took something of a knock yesterday. The only wreckage on the floor of the *Election Call* studio when Mr Prescott left was that of the English language, dust rising from the rubble of smashed syntax.

I have never understood why the Labour spin-doctors are so nervous of the Labour deputy leader. He is the most deniable politician of his generation. Almost every statement he makes can be covered by the phrase "that is not what he meant", for the simple reason that a transcript of his words often conveys no meaning, or several.

I say this in praise of Mr Prescott, not condemnation. He is clearly a man of action in an era of wordsmiths. Obliged by the election campaign to speak, Mr Prescott takes the shortest route from the start to the end of a sentence by the expedient of omitting words along the way. We know what he means and he knows we know what he means.

"He was inferring I was referring today." Textual analysts have built careers on such pronouncements. Mr Prescott was referring to a statement about the effects of the minimum wage, attributed to him as having been made recently but actually made, he claims, five years ago. All perfectly clear.

And on the same subject: "It is socially right that so many people being exploited on poverty pay is quite wrong." This is very nearly the perfect political statement, in that it appears to say two opposite things at the same time. "It is socially right *to do something about the fact* that so many people being exploited on poverty pay is quite wrong" is what Mr Prescott would have said, but he prefers to speak as if contributing to the missing-words round on *Have I Got News For You.*

One of yesterday's callers went off the line having had his views ringingly endorsed by Mr Prescott, or as the deputy leader chose to put it: "I'm with you at one on this." At first I thought he had invited the caller to lunch, but the reply was just a variant on Mr Prescott's style: sometimes, instead of omitting words, he expels them in the wrong order.

Do I mock? No. Mr Prescott has passion, something notably absent from *Election Call* so far. People would be ill-advised to operate heavy machinery after tuning in to most of these programmes, but Mr Prescott grabs the camera by what he would probably call its throat and uses sheer force of will to clear a path through doubt and contradiction.

There was a nice moment yesterday when Thomas Goodhead, 14, from Newport rang up (see above).

Mr Prescott trotted out the usual mantra about "traditional values in a modern setting" and used some examples from the area of health care. How fortuitous. Neither Mr Prescott nor I realised at the time that young Thomas is a relative of Aneurin Bevan, who introduced the NHS.

Near the end of the programme Mr Prescott produced a syntactical masterpiece, a greatest hits of Prescott-speak incorporating a redundant definite article, the word "referendum" used as a verb and a split infinitive: "You know that we've set up a commission to look at the proportional representation and we'd offer that as a matter if agreed to actually referendum the country."

Clear that is I hope.

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The first of a series of interviews with the party leaders: Paddy Ashdown talks to The Times

Paddy puts his shirt on public wisdom

By Peter Stothard

MATTHEW COOK

A hopeful disposition is not the sole qualification to be a prophet: or so Winston Churchill once put it. But it helps. Despite sluggish opinion polls and a schedule of bus rides and croissant lunches that would have made the great old man weep even in his Liberal youth, Paddy Ashdown seemed almost on fire with hope when he came to *The Times* this week.

His first act of the interview was to strip down to a twill-striped white shirt. By the time that the interview was over, he had three times bet that shirt on the successful outcome of his tax-raising, targeted-spending campaign. He was booming with prophecy, too.

Our columnist, Anatole Kaletsky, was the first to be offered the wager, which came with tasteful blue and gold Lib Dem cuff-links, when he suggested that Ashdown's policy of higher taxation was political suicide according to conventional wisdom these days. "I'm betting my shirt that you've got it wrong and that all of you have misread the signals being sent to us," he retorts. "You think that the electorate is super-simplistic about this: high tax bad, low tax good, full stop, end of story. My hunch is that there is a different message. And I think it's being proved right".

The Liberal Democrat leader explains that he sees a society endangered by "the fracturing of the contract on tax". He says that voters are still willing to pay for better public services but are no longer prepared to sign a blank cheque to some ill-respected "Mr Politician". They want to know where the money will go and how it will be spent efficiently. Politics is a service industry and needs to have quality service."

Peter Riddell looks unconvinced. Ashdown points to an experiment in Lib Dem-controlled Richmond, in southwest London, where voters were consulted on whether they wanted a high, medium or low range of council tax, each choice matched with services. He claims that the people have consistently said "go for the high one, because they have won the trust of the electorate that they will deliver what they promise".

But this system, we discover, has been discontinued. Kaletsky presses the point. Surely, now that Labour has promised not to spend more or to raise taxes, the result of this election is likely to be a massive vindication of the principle that those who support higher taxes do not get elected?

"No," Ashdown says, "whether a Tory or Labour government is elected it will have to betray either its public services policy or its tax policy. I predict that within five years both of the other two parties will be coming onto the agenda that we've pioneered in this election. Otherwise the whole concept of public services in this country will go down the drain."

When Ashdown makes a prediction, his demeanour is wholly different from that of his normal discourse. More than any other politician I can remember, he seems genuinely to be trying to "see" the fractured contracts or failing schools or hospitals of which he speaks. He tightens his brow so that an M-shaped line like a McDonald's arch glows from ear to ear. The veins in his temples are inked in pale blue. He shades his eyes so that he looks almost shell-shocked.

It is all a struggle — but a sincere one, we think. He sees a sound future for societies that have found either the consent to tax more or the consent to provide less or the consent for provisions to be made in private ways. For those whose leaders dodge the issue altogether, he sees only more alienation and anger. In this election he is offering up the Audit Commission as "a referee on behalf of the public between the taxpayer and the tax-spender". For the future he sees much greater change.

"What we have to do eventually," he says in full prophetic voice, "is to build in the political sphere what Mrs Thatcher built in the economic sphere." His view of the Thatcher years is that while economic dependency was reduced (and "by and large", he says, "I am in favour of that") "she created an even more dependent political structure". After years of weakening in local government, "we have to strike a new contract between the citizen and the State".

Riddell asks him whether his role for the State is entirely local in nature: after all, that is where the heart and soul and talent of the party is. Ashdown leaps from the contemplative to the combative. "You're wrong, Peter. The idea that we are somehow a pressure group for local government is a misjudgment. Part of our new contract between citizen and State is to put more power down at local level; but part is to engender a culture of experimentation with government across the country.

"We need to find a new settlement in which the concept of political self-reliance is important. If the political business of the next ten or 15 years is managing down the people's aspirations for public services, you have to tie the people in to the process of decision. As long as the taxpayer believes that the money being spent in the local hospital isn't theirs because it is laundered through London, then you will never persuade them to cut this hospital and allow that one to remain open."

At this point the arches on the Ashdown brow are golden again. The prophetic passion is in full flow. We try to wrest the conversation back to the present. Does he really think that the country is in the mood for his "culture of experimentation"? Do not most people have a greater desire just to get on with their lives with the minimum contact with politics at all?

"Well, of course, you are right," he says. But, before we can explore the contradictions between the future and the present, Ashdown is back in the 1970s in his attempt to prove that his vision must necessarily come to pass. "Remember the Red Robbo argument at British Leyland, when Michael Edwardes came along and told the car workers that, sorry, they had to take the responsibility for their own decisions. And they all said: hang on a second, mate, my job is to come in between nine and five and your job is to pay me. Me take responsibility? Certainly not.

"Now we have an exact political parallel of that. Do people want to take responsibility for their actions? No. They want us to decide for them. It's easy. They can blame us when things go wrong and they don't have to get involved. But you can't afford to do that any longer. The system won't work.

"What you're arguing," he tells us with a professorial movement of glasses from shirt pocket to thigh, "is that we should allow the British public to go on as the British worker went on, that it is our job to be benevolent politicians and to deliver them full shopping baskets in all circumstances with every hospital kept open. You can't do that. They are going to have to get involved in the process."

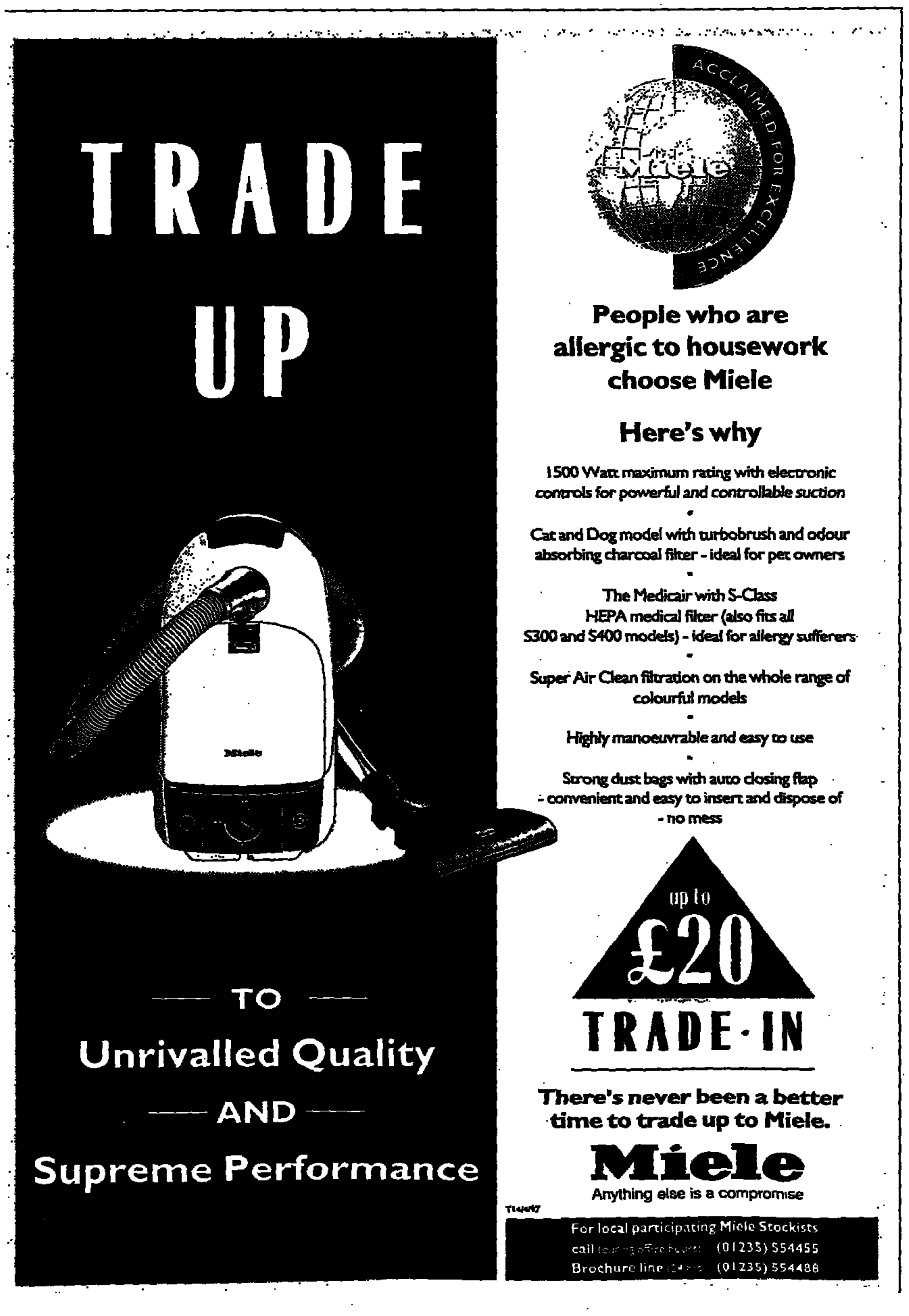
Kaletsky persists with the question that Ashdown's vision, attractive though it may be, must surely be at odds with the success that Labour has enjoyed since weakening its traditional commitment to public services. Out comes the white-twilled wager again, complete with silk tie party-patterned in yellow camels and blue flowers.

"I come back to the fact that I'm betting my shirt on you all being wrong. Labour has made a major strategic error. It has done what British generals are wonderful at doing: it is fighting the next war on the basis of the last one. This is not 1992. The mood of the country is different. I see that we're right and I said at the beginning of the election to my colleagues: dare to be different".

Riddell asks Ashdown if he thinks he is alone with this vision or whether any other prominent politicians share it. "Blair understands perfectly in some areas what we have been talking about, imperfectly in others. He is a moderniser who hasn't yet arrived at his destination. I think Major is also a moderniser. In different circumstances, dealing with a different party, Major would have reconnected politics with the people".

Kaletsky makes one last effort to get the conversation back to the next few months. He asks whether, after a big victory for Labour, both parties could move further away from his ideal and back to the old Left and the aggressive Right. "This is an analysis that drives me more than any other about this election," he concedes. "But in my analysis there are not three main political parties, there are five. There are two Tory parties. And I am closer to Ken Clarke's than Ken Clarke is to Michael Portillo's. And there is new Labour and old Labour. The question for me is whether a powerful united force of Liberal Democrats can be a fixed point, a fulcrum in the process of fracturing around us. I think we can. Where we may end up is with a European structure in which you have a broadly Christian Democrat party and a broadly Social Democrat party and then a liberal party with all its traditional enthusiasms and dedications."

This is at the centre both of Ashdown's vision of the future and his hope for May 1. He imagines that after electoral reform and political fragmentation his party will be left like the German Free Democrats, not eternally out of power but eternally in power, always in coalition with one or other of the larger groups. It is a seductive hope for him and his party, one which keeps him trekking from hall to hall, bus to bus, journalist to journalist, all with no thought of retiring. "Yes, I'm putting my shirt on this one", he says. "I'm putting my shirt on a lot of things."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New arrival spells family delight

By Polly Newton

PADDY ASHDOWN will break off campaigning today to visit his grandson in France and discover how his Christian name is spelt. The Liberal Democrat leader seemed in some doubt on the stump yesterday about the correct spelling, as did his wife.

Mr Ashdown told *The Times* that he thought that it was spelt "M.a.t.h.i.e.s. — the French equivalent of the German Matthuis". But his wife Jane gave a different spelling — Mathius — and she was uncertain whether that version had one 't' or two in it. The name was picked by their daughter Kate, and her French husband Sebastian Theurel.

Paddy Ashdown with wife Jane, left, and daughter Kate, who gave birth to a baby boy on Thursday

Mr Ashdown, who has insisted that the trip would be strictly private, told reporters yesterday that he had spoken to Kate by telephone. He also claimed he had talked with the child as well. "I have had communication with my grandson. It wasn't a soundbite, I can assure you," he declared.

The trip to north Burgundy, where Kate, 31, and M Theurel live, will be short. Mr Ashdown is due to return to London tonight to prepare for a television interview with Sir David Frost.

The birth of their grandson, who weighed just under 9lb, ended an anxious few days for the Ashdowns. The party leader had been "like a cat on hot bricks" as he waited for the news from France, one source disclosed.

The news that he had become a grandfather was relayed to him by Mark Payne, one of the organisers of his election tour, as Mr Ashdown was being interviewed by HTV in Cardiff on Thursday evening. Observers said that he was overcome by tears.

Later Mr Ashdown told a Lib Dem rally in the city that he did not want to let down anyone involved in the general election campaign but that he would be "scampering off" as soon as possible to see his grandson.

Mrs Ashdown said if the baby had been a girl, "Kate and Sebastian had planned to call her Charlotte. We said, 'why call it after a pudding?'"

She said her grandson sounded wonderful: "I have heard him over the telephone, gurgling away. I just want to hold him in my arms, that's all."

The Stamina Factor

John Major:
Age: [illegible]
Freshness rating:
[illegible]
Miles travelled this week: 2,220
Hours spent campaigning on the streets: 19
Interviews: Average 12 per day
Press conferences and rallies: 5
Average working day: 18 hours

Worst moment:
Discovery that John Horam and James Paice had become the first ministers to break ranks and publicly oppose single currency

Tony Blair:
Age: 43
Freshness rating:
★★★★
Miles travelled this week: 1,600
Hours spent campaigning on the streets: 20
Interviews: Average 11 per day
Press conferences and rallies: 10
Average working day: 16 hours

Worst moment:
Waking up on Friday morning to see himself sitting on Chancellor Kohl's knee

Paddy Ashdown:
Age: 56
Freshness rating:
★★
Miles travelled this week: 2,700
Hours spent campaigning on streets: 12
Interviews: Average 10 per day
Press conferences and rallies: 5
Average working day: 19 hours
Average daily TV/radio interviews: 16

Worst moment:
Being 'like a cat on hot bricks' while waiting for the birth of his grandchild

★ Star rating out of 5 provided by Times correspondents travelling with the leaders

America on alert as military gangs mark red-letter day

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK

FEDERAL workers, *military* sentries and National Guard bomb squads across the United States *were on high alert* for today's "Militia Day", the red-letter day for American *militia* groups.

The fourth anniversary of the fiery conclusion of the *Waco siege* — and the second anniversary of the Oklahoma City bombing — allowed the country's numerous military gangs to revel in their self-importance and indulge their *taste for outlandish plots.*

The most bizarre of these was that the US Air Force A10 *Thunderbolt attack jet,* which went missing in the Rockies on April 2, has been hijacked by an anti-government group. According to the conspiracy-theory fraternity, it will today *be directed in a bombing raid* on the federal courthouse in Denver, where the Oklahoma *bomb suspects are being tried.*

The US Air Force dismissed the claim, saying the missing *plane had probably crashed.* A militia man told me after too many beers in a New York bar *this week that it was in a secret* hangar in Colorado.

"Militia Day", or "Patriots' Day", is the *now annual* flagday for the various self-*armed, uniformed,* anti-federalist military gangs that have sprouted in the dustier regions of America in recent years. The fear among federal officials yesterday was that some oddball might try to stage a display of pyrotechnics to mark the April 19 anniversary of the FBI's "murder" — as the militia see it — of the Waco Branch Davidians.

In Atlanta, Georgia, where there has been a spate of attacks on abortion clinics, bomb disposal experts were on standby. From the Washington headquarters of the FBI came a warning to "field agencies" across the nation to beware of suspicious packages. US Justice Department employees were advised to close *Venetian blinds to diminish injuries from flying* glass in the event of an explosion.

Guards at military bases and federal agency buildings were urged to be especially *vigilant. Leave* at the Colorado-based North American Aerospace Defence Command *was cancelled after an unspecified* security threat. "We are certainly aware of April 19," *said Bill Licatovich, a spokes*man for the US Marshals Service. The General Services Administration, responsible for security of federal buildings, admitted that it was keeping a special watch on central Denver.

In Dallas, Texas, a three-day "Preparedness Expo '97" exhibition and conference, which ends tomorrow, was attracting thousands who share a distrust for federal government and the big hand of "Uncle Sam".

Seminars were held about "what really happened" in the Oklahoma bombing and at Waco. *If some people are to be* believed, the whole thing was planned and approved by Washington, and the refrain of those attending was "personal freedom". Stands at the *conference were selling* emergency stores for the much-expected Armageddon, from Geiger counters to powdered foods, plus batteries, blankets, generators and fuel cans.

Last night saw a well-attended lecture from survivalists, people who are convinced that the US Gov*ernment will lead the nation to* disaster, but keen to pass on their tips on how independent-*minded citizens might endure* the day of reckoning.

Dole invests in wife's future

FROM IAN BRODIE
IN WASHINGTON

Dole: contender for presidency in 2000

BOB DOLE was seen in *Washington yesterday as* having helped the presidential prospects of his wife Elizabeth *with a controversial loan* enabling Newt Gingrich to pay off an ethics fine of $300,000 (£185,000).

Mr Dole said his bail-out for the House Speaker was a long-term investment in the Republican Party, but more specifically it could be a down payment on gathering support for Mrs Dole if she decides to run for president or vice-president in 2000, as Mr Dole indicates she might.

He promoted her as a contender earlier this week at Harvard University during his *first* important speech *since* his defeat by President Clinton last November. In *repeatedly trumpeting her cre*dentials, Mr Dole said that while his days in politics were *over, that was not yet the case* for "the Dole who may yet reside at 1600 Pennsylvania *Avenue" — the White House.*

Mrs Dole, 60, proved herself an astute and popular *campaigner last year.* Although she has never run for office, she has held two Cabinet *posts and is now president* of the American Red Cross. Republicans have never nomi*nated a woman for President* or Vice-President, but some in the party feel it would be a *vote-catching idea.*

Mr Gingrich will not have to pay a dime of principal or *interest on the loan for eight* years and so far no collateral has been negotiated, an ar*rangement many bankers said* they would not accept.

Harvard inquiry over racist hate mail

FROM TOM RHODES
IN BOSTON

HARVARD University has launched a campus investigation after white supremacist and anti-homosexual hate mail, calling for a ban on politically correct diversity, was distributed there.

Joseph Nye, dean of the Kennedy School of Government, this week promised to prosecute those involved and launched a campaign to recruit more minorities. Normally concerned with the study of geopolitical issues, the Kennedy School has been racked by student protests since a group called Citizens for a Fag-Free KSG sent letters to four gay graduates who had demanded greater diversity in the faculty and curriculum. In obscene language, the letters vowed to prevent more diversity.

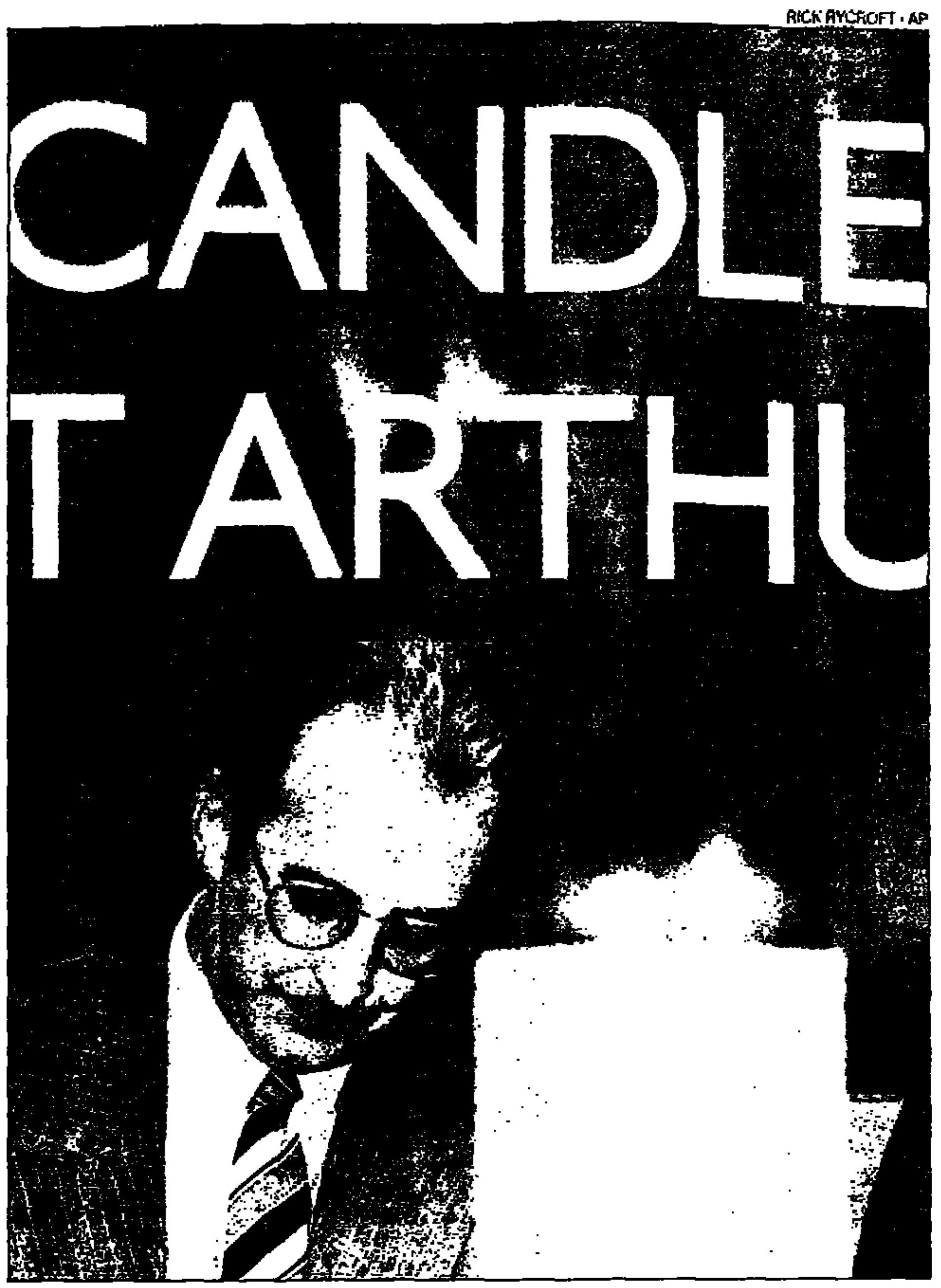
A separate memorandum posted to *The Citizen,* the student newspaper, described the group as consisting of *patriots for freedom* and the American way, whose mission was to root out homosexuals.

"We are all in favour of a white heterosexual school. We *are tired of the politically* correct atmosphere at the Kennedy School, which con*tinually fails to foster contro*versial views," the memorandum said. "We feel that *homosexuality is unnatural* and undesirable. Therefore we feel that a school which *probably will foster future* leaders should have no part of it."

Describing affirmative action as wrong, the memorandum contained slurs against *blacks, Asians and Jews,* as well as gays and lesbians. The bigoted language in the notes *and the suggestion that they* might represent a serious dissident faction have an*gered professors and students* as the university celebrates Harvard Queer month, an *activist agenda.*

Mr Nye said the missives were perhaps only puerile *parodies but he has brought* in the campus police to conduct an investigation. More*over, the hate mail has had* the opposite effect, with con*servative students suggesting that the letters may have been* posted by gay activists.

RICK RYCROFT · AP



Gordon Bounds, from Dunblane, in Sydney yesterday. The sign reads: "Light a candle in memory of Port Arthur" — scene of last year's Tasmanian massacre

Dunblane visit prompts gun law rethink in Australia

FROM RACHEL BRIDGE IN SYDNEY

BOB CARR, the Premier of New South Wales, yesterday *said the federal Government* would look at introducing greater controls on handguns *in Australia after claims* by parents of the Dunblane victims that the laws are as lax as *they were in Britain before the* school massacre.

Three relatives of children *shot* at the Scottish school gymnasium are in Australia to meet the families of victims of *the Port Arthur massacre last* April, in which 35 people died when Martin Bryant opened fire at the Tasmanian tourist site. Gordon Bounds, a family friend of Aimie Adam, who was seriously wounded at Dunblane, said: "You can't afford for lives to be lost before legislation is changed."

Rebecca Peters, chairman of the National Coalition for Gun Control, said that while Australia had tightened the laws on semi-automatic rifles and shotguns after the Port Arthur tragedy, it had failed to address the regulation of handguns. Under Australia's existing laws a person owning a handgun must be a member of a target shooting club, but there is no requirement to store guns at shooting clubs nor limits on the number of handguns a person may own.

At an emotional gathering in Sydney, the Dunblane relatives asked Australians to mark the first anniversary of the Port Arthur tragedy by lighting candles on April 28 in the same way that people across Britain lit candles on March 13 in memory of the Dunblane victims.

Mr Carr donated a A$6,000 (£2,800) cheque to support the victims of the Dunblane shooting and said that he had written to John Major and Tony Blair asking them to match his contribution.

WORLD SUMMARY

Belgium to act on child case errors

Brussels: Disciplinary proceedings are being launched against Belgian officials criticised by a parliamentary report into bungled investigations into missing children, Jean-Luc Dehaene, the Prime Minister, said yesterday.

Mr Dehaene committed his Government to follow recommendations to overhaul the police and judiciary. According to an opinion poll, two thirds of Belgians want Johan Vande Lanotte, the Interior Minister, and Stefaan De Clercq, the Justice Minister, to quit over mishandled child sex and murder inquiries. *(AFP)*

Famine nears

Geneva: North Korea has warned the World Food Programme that food will run out by the end of the month, and the agency said aid was not coming in fast enough to avoid a catastrophe (Peter Capella writes). Pyongyang is distributing 100 grammes of rice for each person a day. At least 134 children are said to have *died of hunger.*

Cheque charges

Johannesburg: President Mandela's grandson has ap*peared in Johannesburg Mag*istrates' Court and will stand trial on May 13 (Inigo Gilmore *writes*). Ntsika Dlamini and his co-accused, Julian Chame, both 22, are accused of stealing a 5,000 rand (£660) cheque and attempting to cash it at a bank.

Woman of straw

Colombo: Sattambige Sriyaratne, 36, who posed as a woman for about three years, got illegally married and won an award for being Sri Lanka's best female entrepreneur, has been committed to hospital by a magistrate for psychiatric checks, court officials said. *(Reuter)*

Score to settle

Kiev: Members of the Ukraine National Symphony Orchestra demonstrated outside the Culture Ministry and played the funeral march in mourning for months of unpaid salaries. *(AP)*

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Mobutu clan 'is plotting to kill US oil workers'

Zaire's leader allegedly wants a massacre to provoke foreign action and halt the rebels, **Sam Kiley** writes in Kinshasa

PRESIDENT Mobutu's family and close entourage are considering plans to kill American expatriates working in the Zairean port city of Matadi using an Angolan rebel group.

Sources within the family said that the plot is aimed at provoking military intervention to prevent advancing Zairean guerrillas from taking Kinshasa, the capital.

The plan, which has not yet been accepted by the President, is that a 1,000-man group based in the Angolan enclave of Cabinda, a few miles from Matadi, would be armed by Zaire and sent into the town. "Those who support the scheme believe that they can pretend to the outside world that the killing was done by Laurent Kabila [the leader of Zaire's rebel movement]," said a source at Mr Mobutu's presidential palace.

Both this source and others said that Americans, most of them employees of oil companies, would be targeted. "Their throats are to be cut. The planners want to make the scene as horrible as possible," one member of the President's family said.

Mobutu Nzanga, 27, the President's son, was reported by a news agency yesterday to have dismissed the massacre suggestion as "pure intoxication" and "ridiculous nonsense". Other members of the family have also argued against the plot and insist that the family should not be behind any schemes for a violent end to Mr Mobutu's 32-year rule. "Killing Americans or any other group of people would be crazy, and stupid. Nothing would provoke the US more than this sort of an action. Those who back the idea are just trying to wreck the peace process," said one family member.

However, one source said the killers were likely to be recruited from the Angolan rebel group, the Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda, which has been based in Zaire for 20 years. Another member of the President's staff, who opposes the plan, said: "The first stage of the plot is to check out if the Angolans are capable of carrying out the mission. That part of it is under way and we expect our people to report back soon."

> ‘Their throats are to be cut. The planners want to make it as horrible as possible’

The scheme is clearly based on an atrocity committed by Mr Mobutu's forces in 1978. Facing a secessionist uprising and an invasion by Katangan gendarmes, his army slaughtered 2,000 foreigners in the cobalt mining town of Kolwezi. France immediately sent paratroopers to the city to restore order because most of the victims were French and Belgian.

However, the sources who oppose the plan said yesterday that they did not believe foreign soldiers would be sent to Kinshasa to save Mr Mobutu if he ordered a bloodbath. "It's more likely that they would land a helicopter gunship in his garden and take him away," said one family member.

Mwana Nanga Mawapanga, the rebel spokesman, said yesterday: "I am sure that if Mobutu's plot succeeds, there will be foreign forces in Kinshasa under the pretext of evacuating the citizens, and we don't like that."

☐ **Washington:** American officials said yesterday that they were discounting the claims that Mr Mobutu had ordered the massacre of all expatriates in Kinshasa. "We have approached Mobutu's people about this and they've said it's absolute nonsense," a US State Department official said. *(Reuter)*

Epidemic fear halts airlift of refugees

FROM DAVID ORR
IN KISANGANI

REPATRIATION of Rwandan refugees from the Zairean interior has been suspended amid fears of a cholera epidemic and Zairean violence. The first planned airlift — of 80 Rwandan children — was cancelled at Kisangani yesterday after angry scenes during which United Nations workers were briefly held hostage and their vehicles stoned.

"The operation seems to be in bad trouble," conceded Paul Stromberg for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. "We are confused and frustrated. This latest development is a real setback. It looks like the refugees could now be here for a while. The evacuation has been suspended indefinitely."

There are an estimated 100,000 Rwandan refugees living in makeshift camps and in the bush south of Kisangani. So far 327 cases of cholera have been detected at the encampment of Kasese about 20 miles south of the city. At least 25 Rwandan refugees are known to have died from cholera in the past week.

Zairean rebels, who now control about half the country, were greeted by jubilant residents when they took Kisangani, Zaire's third city, last month. But the inhabitants have grown increasingly hostile to the refugees, among more than two million Hutus who fled Rwanda after the 1994 genocide. Many still in Zaire are deemed to have taken part in the genocide and, more recently, to have fought with the Zairean Army against the rebels.

YOAV LEMMER / EPA

Binyamin Netanyahu, with his wife Sarah, at the funeral yesterday of the former Israeli President, Chaim Herzog

Pressure grows on Netanyahu to resign

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER
IN JERUSALEM

BINYAMIN NETANYAHU, the Israeli Prime Minister, was last night under growing pressure to resign if the state prosecutor's report, published tomorrow, supports an unprecedented police recommendation that he be indicted for fraud and breach of trust.

Edna Arbel, the state attorney, said that the report had been completed and that it contained "difficult decisions" but she refused to reveal details. The conclusions have been supported by the Attorney-General, Elyakim Rubinstein.

The scandal was sparked by Israel TV allegations three months ago that political corruption had been involved in Mr Netanyahu's short-lived appointment of the previous attorney-general, Roni Bar-On, who resigned after 12 hours amid an outcry over his blatant unsuitability. The appointment was allegedly fixed to permit a key government supporter, Aryeh Deri, head of the religious Shas party, to secure a plea bargain in a corruption case.

An opinion poll published by the Tel Aviv daily *Maariv* showed 52.6 per cent of Israelis say Mr Netanyahu must stand down and call elections if indicted. Another, in the rival paper *Yediot Ahronot*, showed 52 per cent want him to resign if convicted.

Even if no charges are preferred against Mr Netanyahu — the outcome most top Israeli legal experts predict — two key parties holding 11 seats in his coalition may pull out, triggering fresh elections, should the report be sufficiently critical.

Yesterday Tova Tsimuki, a *Yediot Ahronot* reporter known for her contacts in the Justice Ministry, claimed that although there would be no indictment of Mr Netanyahu "the report will characterise the Prime Minister's role in the affair in severe terms".

Chirac weighs June poll

Chirac likely to call snap election as Maastricht woes increase

FROM SUSAN BELL
IN PARIS

PRESIDENT CHIRAC is expected to announce a snap election within the next few days. Speculation in the French press and among members of parliament that he would dissolve the National Assembly to secure a renewed centre-right majority for the remainder of his seven-year term reached fever pitch yesterday as it was reported that he would make his decision after spending the weekend with advisers.

"Dissolving [parliament] looks the most likely possibility, but nothing is ruled out," said Michel Péricard, president of M Chirac's Gaullist RPR party in the National Assembly. *Le Monde* reported that those in favour of a snap election were confident they had convinced the President of their arguments. June 1 and 8 have been singled out by commentators as the most likely days for the two-round election, after M Chirac returns on May 1 from a trip to China and before he attends the European Union summit in Amsterdam on June 15.

The National Assembly was emptier than usual for a Friday afternoon, as deputies hurried back to their constituencies last night. The state-owned television channel TF1 reported that printers are laying in stocks of paper in preparation for orders of campaign literature.

For the first time since the rumours of an early election began to appear in the French press two weeks ago, the French financial market became unsettled yesterday. The bourse slumped 2.2 per cent in early trading, and the franc slipped to its lowest level against the mark this month.

M Chirac has been under pressure from most centre-right politicians, including Alain Juppé, the Prime Minister, to call a general election.

The arguments in favour look almost overwhelming. The Government must impose a strict austerity drive if France is to meet the Maastricht 3 per cent maximum budget deficit criteria for single currency in 1998. A leaked finance ministry memo forecasting a deficit of 3.8 per cent this year, rising to 4.5 per cent next year, blamed the size of the shortfall on an increase in social security spending resulting from a 12.8 per cent unemployment rate and a fall of Fr15 billion (£1.6 billion) from VAT. An early election would take advantage of the fact that the Socialists are in disarray. In the mind of the French public, they still bear the scars of the Mitterrand era. A snap election will prevent either the Left or the extreme-right National Front from mounting an orchestrated campaign, or from capitalising on public discontent with austerity measures as they would be able to do if the elections were called next year.

Leading article, page 21

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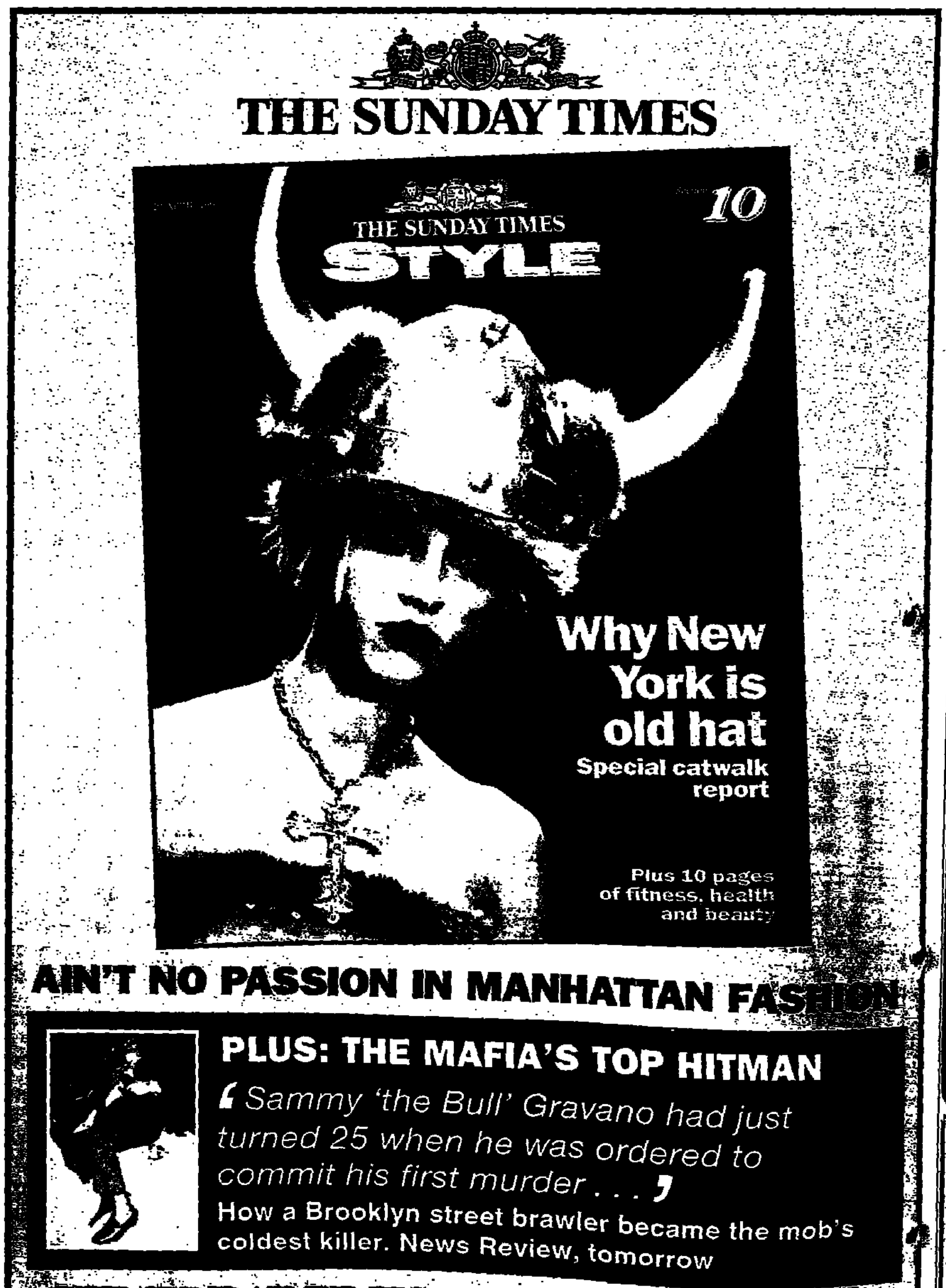

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Italy goes on alert after Iranian terrorist squad 'sets up base in Milan'

FROM RICHARD OWEN
IN ROME

ITALIAN military intelligence reported yesterday *that Iran's* "terrorist centre in Europe" had moved south of the Alps from Germany to Milan, and issued a warning of an *imminent* terrorist attack on the Pope "or an Italian target such as an airport".

Police went on high alert throughout Italy and in Vatican City, with explosives experts and sniffer dogs meeting all flights to *Rome and Milan* from the Middle East and North Africa. The warning came after a marked rise in tension between Tehran and European capitals in the wake of a German court ruling last week linking Iran to the killing of four Kurdish dissidents in a Berlin restaurant in September 1992.

Iranian anger over the German verdict coincided with the discovery of an apparent plot to blow up the Pope's *motorcade* during his visit to Sarajevo last *weekend*. Bosnian Muslim sources said the 23 landmines found by chance under a road bridge and defused hours before the pontiff drove into Sarajevo from the airport were a relic of the Bosnian war. But Italian reports said the devices had been planted by "Turkish Islamic terrorists" in an attempt to "finish the business of 1981" — a reference to the attempt on the Pope's life by Mehmet Ali Agca, a Turkish gunman linked *to the shadowy* right-wing Turkish terrorist organisation *known as the Grey Wolves*.

Reports said the Sarajevo mine attack had been planned by the Grey Wolves with Iranian-backed Mujahidin who had fought in Afghanistan and then in Bosnia.

Italian officials said that although Rome had "good relations" with Iran and other Muslim na*tions, the warning of Islamic* terrorism was being taken seriously. It followed an emergency meeting of Italian intelligence chiefs at *the Interior Ministry in Rome on* Thursday night. The atmosphere *in Italy is jittery after a still*-unexplained fire at Turin Cathedral last Friday, which nearly destroyed the Turin Shroud, and the discovery of dynamite on the funicular railway in Genoa. Yesterday an unexploded Second World War hand grenade was found near the Ponte Vecchio in Florence.

The Vatican said the Pope planned to visit Beirut next month, even though Lebanon is still the base of Hezbollah, the Iranian-backed *militant* Shia group. Cardinal Angelo Sodano, the Vatican *Secretary of State*, said the pontiff, 76, was "not especially alarmed".

Italian newspapers, quoting intelligence sources and Iranian exiles, said the "headquarters of Iranian terrorism and espionage in Europe" had been transferred to Milan in the guise of an "Islamic cultural centre". *La Repubblica* noted that the "centre" was *funded* and organised by Mohsen Rafik Doust, described as a "*fanatical*" Iranian official close to President Rafsanjani.

Corriere della Sera, published in *Milan, said the decision to relocate* to the city had been taken a year ago when Bonn first accused the Iranian intelligence services of being behind the 1992 Berlin murders. The paper said two Islamic "hit squads" were believed to have entered Italy recently, one by train, the other by boat from Tunisia.

☐ ***Tehran:*** *Hossein Allah-Karam*, head of the Ansare Hezbollah *organisation, said that he would* unleash a string of suicide bombings *against Germany if it did not* apologise for the court ruling that *blamed Iran's leaders for the 1992* killings. *(AP)*

Greek troops give poetic Albanian rebels wide berth

Tom Walker in Vlore reports how a "traditional" welcome from revolutionaries toting guns and verse was avoided

GREEK troops yesterday delayed their entry into the anarchic southern Albanian port of Vlore, after warnings from an Italian exploratory mission that they had been confronted by local warlords.

The transport ship *Samos*, with 130 troops and 34 vehicles on board, diverted north and docked at Durres, which is safely under multinational control. Last night the Greeks drove south and made a temporary base in Fier, just north of Vlore, to await instructions from Operation Alba's Italian commander.

The leader of Vlore's self-proclaimed Committee for Public Salvation, Albert Shite, was surprised by the Greeks' decision, assuring them that they "are welcome here according to our tradition of hospitality". *It seems, however*, that it was this same *traditional hospitality* — a gun-toting gang met the Ital*ians 24 hours earlier* — which persuaded the two colonels to *divert to Durres. The Greeks* also claimed that the approach *channels to Vlore harbour* were choked by shipwrecks.

The citizens of Vlore, who were badly affected by the failed pyramid investment schemes, remain insistent that their town will remain outside the Government's control as long as *President Berisha* — whom they blame for the loss *of their life savings* — *stays in* power.

Mr Shite, a 26-year-old resembling a young Bruce Springsteen, the American rock star, gathers his committee each day in a school building on Vlore's ruined boulevard. *Journalists are ex*cluded but the angry delibera*tions* can easily be heard through the door: yesterday's session calmed down only after one member of the *committee stood and read* a poem that he had composed denouncing Mr Berisha.

Resplendent in a black padded top with imitation fur hood, drainpipe jeans and winkle-pickers, *Mr Shite then* drove his green Mercedes to *Vlore's independence monu*ment, where he addressed a *crowd that was largely male*, elderly and angry, reminding *them not to harm foreign* troops. The committee's resi*dent poet then read another* few stanzas, highly critical of *the Italian Navy and the* President, which sparked a *hearty rendition of* "*Down* with Berisha!"

"That's *all the material the* committee has for you today," *Mr Shite said.* "*Please come* back tomorrow." After receiving *pavement plaudits*, Mr Shite was ready to meet the press.

A former import-export trader with business interests in Greece, he said he had been "*distinguished from other in*tellectuals" after he spoke on *Vlore's private television sta*tion. "I didn't choose politics and I do *not* belong to any political party," he said.

Mr Shite added that the residents of Vlore would put down their weapons only *after* Mr Berisha resigned. He urged *the President not to* contemplate sending in his *own security forces* under the cover of Operation Alba in an attempt to control Vlore. "*If these troops could have among them armed elements* of Sali Berisha, then this *would cause a civil war in* Albania."

Charming and with a distinct lack of the machismo *displayed by other* rebel leaders, Mr Shite said he simply *wanted some of his money* back to start in business *again. "I have lost all my* security in life," he said.

☐ ***Tirana:*** *Leka Zog, the son* of Albania's last monarch, *said yesterday that* Mr Berisha had agreed to hold a referendum *asking Albanians* whether they want to restore *the monarchy 58 years after* King Zog fled the country. *Leka Zog, who wants to re*sume the monarchy as King *Leka Zog I, said the political* parties and Mr Berisha would *have to determine the timing* of the vote. *(Reuter)*

SRDJAN SUKI / AFP

A poverty-stricken elderly Bulgarian woman selling fruit in a Sofia street. Prices of goods have risen 2,000 per cent since March 1996

Bulgarian voters look to keep Socialists in the cold

FROM JAMES PETTIFER
IN SOFIA

BULGARIANS go to the polls this cold wintry weekend for parliamenta*ry elections in which President* Stoyanov's right-wing Union of Dem*ocratic Forces (UDF) is likely to sweep* all before it. Opinion polls suggest the *UDF will pick up between 50 and 60* per cent of the vote, with the Socialists, *the former Communists, whose Gov*ernment fell in chaos last winter, only reaching about 25 per cent. About 70 *per cent say they will vote, suggesting* a relatively low turn-out that will *probably assist the Right.*

It has been a quiet campaign with*out the passion and street anger that* marked last winter's uprising against *Zhan Videnov's Government.* The Socialists are a shadow of their former selves, *and seem resigned to a spell in* opposition. It is difficult to find a *Socialist poster in Sofia, while the* dark blue UDF pictures of President Stoyanov are ubiquitous. But the Socialists' *strength* has always been in the countryside and small towns. There is a hardcore vote among peasants who have seen living stan*dards plummet as fuel and fertiliser* prices have soared.

A major campaign issue has been the prospect of Nato and European *Union membership, with the UDF* promising rapid progress on both. But *in the months since the Socialists fell*, Bulgaria has been rebuffed by the EU, and the interim Government of Stefan Sofiansky, a UDF functionary, has moved noticeably closer to Moscow. Russia still accounts for more than a quarter of Bulgaria's foreign trade, with whole industries, such as timber, having Russian and often Mafia links.

In Moscow this week, Mr Sofiansky said Nato's "shadow will never dark*en*" Bulgarian-Russian relations. It was agreed to set up a free-trade zone, and negotiations are under way for Bulgaria to buy 14 MiG29 fighters.

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BRITISH MADE

Politicians and celebrities vie for limelight at rocking grandmother's forty-eighth birthday party

Russia in thrall to pop diva

MOSCOW FILE
by RICHARD BEESTON

FOR *a few hours this* week the whole of Russia came to a standstill as the country paid its respects to Alla Pugachyova, the flame-haired pop singer and grandmother, who remains undisputedly the *nation's* favourite performer.

Top entertainers and members of the political elite joined thousands of fans at Moscow's Olympic stadium for a televised party to mark the 48th birthday of a woman who has hogged the limelight since her first hit single in 1975. To an outsider Mrs Pugachyova's universal popularity is something of a enigma. Although likened by her fans to Barbra Streisand and Tina Turner, the similarities are not immediately obvious. The plump, gap-toothed Russian diva's raspy love songs and tight miniskirts, which once shocked and thrilled Soviet audiences, seem out of place in a country obsessed by Western culture, where pop music is dominated by local teenage rap and rock groups.

Nevertheless, the adoration is genuine and the fans shrieked with pleasure when she sang her aptly-named hit *Prima Donna*, which is Russia's entry for next month's Eurovision song contest in Dublin. One indication of her popularity was the way politicians were eager for a chance to attend her party. Boris Nemtsov, the young, good-looking and popular Deputy Prime Minister, declared on television that he was in love with the ageing pop star and gave her a kiss and a bouquet of roses to prove it.

Not to be outdone, Vladimir Zhirinovsky, the ultra-nationalist leader, proclaimed her "woman of the planet" and complained when his tribute was not televised.

Mrs Pugachyova, whose colourful private life is the mainstay of Russian gossip columnists, gave the press more material when Filip Kirkorov, her fourth husband and a man 18 years her junior, presented her with a 30ft-long white limousine.

Certainly, part of her continued popularity is due to her canny showbiz instincts. According to Aleksei Belyakov, her biographer, the announcement 18 months ago that she was quitting may have been a ploy to attract fresh public interest in her career.

There are other reasons for her enduring appeal, however. "Every woman between the ages of 25 and 50 in Russia lost their virginity to the sound of an Alla Pugachyova song," said one fan. "Musicians who can evoke those sort of sentiments will always be popular."

Inflation homes in on US envoy

THE Clinton Administration is expected any day to announce the appointment of James Collins, a career diplomat, as its new Ambassador to Moscow. But there is concern that he will have nowhere to live. Spaso House, the 18th-century mansion that has been the US Ambassador's residence since 1960, is at the centre of a rent row. Under a 20-year lease signed in 1985, the rent was fixed at 72,500 roubles a year, when the Russian currency had parity with the pound. But with hyperinflation, the US is now paying about £10 a year. The Russians want the lease to be renegotiated and have threatened repossession if the Americans do not back down.

REX

Alla Pugachyova, whose popularity provokes declarations of adoration

Sweet smell of success for Mayor

MUSCOVITES have many ways of describing their Mayor, Yuri Luzhkov. His detractors call him tough and thuggish, while his supporters love his energy and efficiency. Until now, however, nobody has ever thought of the bald-headed city boss as "sweet-smelling".

So it was with great surprise that shoppers scanning the shelves of popular Western aftershaves spotted an unusual item recently, a new lotion called "Mer" ("Mayor"), which promises to make any man smell "fresh and masculine". The scent, the brainchild of the city's Novaya Zarya perfume factory, was intended to honour the Mayor for Moscow's 850th anniversary this year.

"Whether you like Luzhkov or not, no one can deny that Moscow has a real boss," said a factory spokeswoman. "Maybe after Russian women give their husbands this fragrance, it will inspire them to be more like Luzhkov, to get off the sofa, take charge and make the lives of women easier." At £5 a bottle, the lotion is selling well, but one man told the *Moscow Times* he thought it smelt of cucumbers. Another wondered why anyone would pay to share the odour of a bureaucrat.

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William Packer, Financial Times 29/30 March 1997.

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Andrew Lambirth, The Spectator 22 March.

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Elvis back on track with Dylan

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK

PREVIOUSLY unreleased recordings of Elvis Presley are to be included in a forthcoming album which will mark the twentieth anniversary of the singer's death.

Some of the material, which includes Presley singing a ponderously basso cover version of Bob Dylan's *Blowin' in the Wind*, was found in a locked filing cabinet which belonged to the singer's father, Vernon. Researchers cut a new key for the cabinet, opened it cautiously and *found* a mixed bag of Presley musical memorabilia. Much of it was worthless, but it included the Dylan song.

RCA Records, which owns many of the rights to Presley's music, hopes to capitalise on the present public taste for retrospective, often imperfect rock anthologies. *Elvis Presley: A Life in Music* will, said RCA, contain 77 unreleased Presley performances.

Church in Tuscany yields 16th-century mummies

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

NINE perfectly preserved and fully clothed bodies of men, women and children dating from the 16th century have been discovered at a Tuscan church celebrated for its Piero della Francesca frescoes. Officials at the Basilica of San Francesco in Arezzo said the mummified corpses amounted to a "16th century time capsule".

The basilica, a magnet for tourists, is famed for Piero's cycle, *The Legend of the True Cross*, a remarkable series of frescoes *completed* in 1466 depicting human history and redemption, with portraits of Solomon, the Queen of Sheba and the Empress Helena, the mother of Constantine. The frescoes had been damaged by damp and have been restored. The costumed bodies came to light when workmen *ripped* up the basilica floor to install dehumidifying systems in the final phase of restoration.

The bodies, found in plain wooden coffins with black crosses painted on the lids, have been taken for DNA tests at Pisa University. They are being examined by Professor Gino Fornaciari, Italy's *foremost "paleo-pathologist"*, known as "doctor to the ancients" for his work on the remains of such "patients" as Pope Gregory VII (who reigned from 1073-85). Professor Fornaciari said the coffins found at Arezzo were "spaceships from *another* world, *carrying a precious cargo of information*". New technology would enable scientists to discover fresh clues to the lost past, he told *La Repubblica*. He said the bodies had not been embalmed but had dried naturally. "This is a chance phenomenon, and very rare," *the professor said*.

Officials at Arezzo said that although the basilica walls suffered from damp, the space beneath the floor was unnaturally dry. This was because the floor, finished in 1377, had been formed from the ceiling of an earlier 13th century Romanesque church beneath it.

Church officials are examining local records to identify the bodies, in addition to DNA tests on the tissue and bone. Professor Fornaciari said the fact that the nine had been buried close to the main altar and the Piero frescoes suggested *they were considered "very important"*, and may have been benefactors of the Franciscan order. It was first thought the nine might have been buried at the time the artist was finishing his paintings, but a bronze medallion on one body is dated a century later.

There are 300 extant ancient Egyptian mummies, but "natural mummies" accidentally preserved by dry air, offer rare opportunities for scientists and historians to gain insights into the more recent past.

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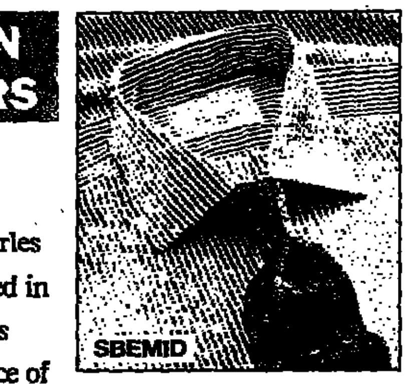

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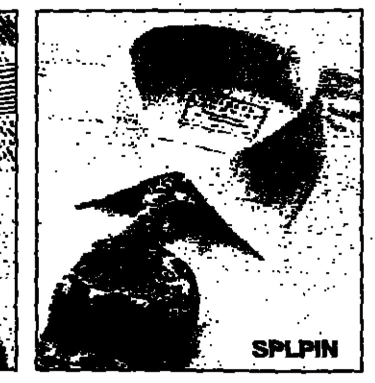

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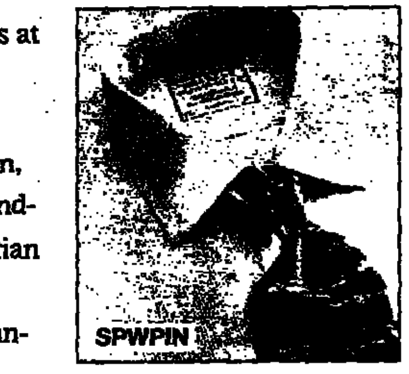

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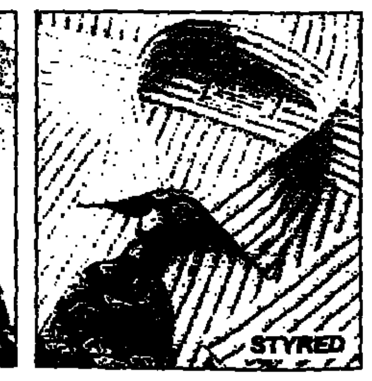

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CHANGING TIMES

■ OPINION

Channel 5 should not panic about its ratings: after all, most of our finest cultural jewels are ignored

■ THEATRE

A new London staging of *The Goodbye Girl* offers a predictable night of slush

THE TIMES ARTS

■ NEXT WEEK

The man behind Easy Rawlins: Walter Moseley explains the background to his new book

■ ON MONDAY

Dangerous to know: how boldness paid off for the theatre director Phyllida Lloyd

Please don't watch, it spoils the fun

WEEK IN THE ARTS

RICHARD MORRISON

Are spirits sagging at Channel 5 following reports that its daytime programmes are being watched by absolutely nobody at all? If so, they shouldn't be. Some of our most cherished cultural institutions are united by one trait: they are happily ignored by the entire population.

Take Radio 3. It broadcasts some jolly fascinating stuff — about Estonian opera, say, or Finnish lutes — that runs for months and doesn't notch up so much as a blip on the old audience meter. A few years ago a foolhardy Radio 3 controller polled his own staff and discovered that even *they* didn't tune in, except by accident.

Or consider first-class county cricket, a ritual that is mostly conducted in front of no spectators at all, or at least none under the age of 102. What else? Well, we have the world's greatest cathedral choirs, and every night they sing Evensong sublimely to themselves and a few appreciative gargoyles. And we have the world's "biggest and best" arts festival, but 95 per cent of all those Fringe hopefuls who trudge to Edinburgh each August find themselves performing *Hamlet* to nobody.

Yet only a philistine would advocate the abolition of Radio 3, or the Edinburgh Festival, or county cricket. They are national treasures. And it is the sign of a civilised nation that they are there, like the emergency services, should anybody need them.

So the fact that Channel 5 has graduated so quickly to this elite division — the Premier League of Invisibility — should be cause for rejoicing. After all, it's far more stylish to have no viewers at all than, say, two men and a dog — like the extended *Nine O'Clock News*. This way, Channel 5 can remain forever a source of delicious fantasy. Just what *are* the *Adventures of a Bush Patrol* (8am)? Why does nobody want to spend breakfast watching "Presidents Nixon and Ford explain how the Vietnam War affected foreign policy" (*Wideworld*, 8.30am)? And what is it about *Wishbone* ("a talking dog's time-travelling adventure", 9am) that repulses every man, woman and child in Britain?

We should not be told. Like the allure of the Finnish lute, these matters are best left to the imagination. Keep it up, Channel 5! And if your daytime viewing figures do start to show alarming signs of life, my advice is to kill them off completely with a hefty dose of election coverage.

That well-known thespian nightmare — The Curse of H_2O — has claimed another victim. This time the waterlogged disaster looks like being a preposterous musical called *Titanic* which, as its name subtly suggests, concocts a song and dance out of the tragic tale of the doomed liner. I'm sure that it's all done in the best possible taste.

The show opens in New York next Wednesday. At least, that is the plan. Unfortunately, despite a £6 million budget, previews have been beset by a technical problem of a peculiarly fundamental nature: the damn ship can't be relied upon to go down at the requisite moment. Yes, 85 years too late, mankind really does seem to have constructed an unsinkable Titanic. (Is this what theatre critics call a "surprise happy ending"?) It would be a terrible headache for *Titanic's* producer, except that the poor chap had a fatal heart attack after the first rehearsal.

The Broadway show is not the only troubled *Titanic* around. A film of the same name is currently being made by James Cameron, a director who seems to specialise in disaster movies in all senses. Its budget has climbed above £120 million (or £150 million, depending on which lurid estimate you read), and it's still rising — a bit like the water in the Titanic's ballroom. Indeed, Cap'n Cameron's 755ft Titanic replica, floating in a 17-million gallon tank, is proving so costly that two Hollywood studios — Paramount and Fox — have agreed to share the tab. And strange accidents are happening to his crew: 50 of them were temporarily incapacitated by the hallucinatory drug known as "angel dust" after consuming a mysterious lobster soup.

Hollywood is being irresistibly reminded of *Waterworld*, the soggy Kevin Costner epic that sloshed around the high seas for months at colossal cost to its backers' wallets and its star's ego. But in Britain we have our own watery thespian disaster to recall. Seasoned theatre-goers will remember *Way Upstream*, Alan Ayckbourn's black comedy about four friends holidaying on the Norfolk Broads. At the National Theatre in 1982 it must have seemed like a brilliant wheeze to devise a set consisting of a 24ft cabin cruiser and a 6,000-gallon tank. Unfortunately, the tank sprang a leak. Then another. There wasn't a dry eye in the house, but on the other hand there wasn't a dry floorboard either. The plumbing bill came to £125,000.

Curiously, despite the epic scope for catastrophe, aquatic spectacles exert a bizarre grip on theatre folk. There are shipwecks and floods in Shakespeare, Mozart, Verdi, Wagner and Britten. Even Sir Cliff Richard's magnum opus, *Heathcliff*, manages to incorporate a storm at sea — quite a feat, given that *Wuthering Heights* is set on the Yorkshire moors.

But if the Titanic taught us anything, it is that hostile briny elements often conspire to thwart the best-laid plans of mice, men . . . and luvvies. To the old showbiz adage — "Never act with children or animals" — should be added another clause: "or in anything that involves tanks of water".

A cute case now terminal

THEATRE: **Benedict Nightingale** overdoses on the sugar in the musical of Neil Simon's *The Goodbye Girl*

DONALD COOPER

Gary Wilmot and Ann Crumb in *The Goodbye Girl*, revamped as a musical even more sentimental than the already sentimental original film

You don't need to have seen *The Goodbye Girl* on screen to know the plot of the musical derived from it. You just have to hear the name of the librettist, who is Neil Simon, and listen to his opening scene (at the Albery). Single mother with cute 11-year-old daughter has just been abandoned by her lover. Enter the single bloke to whom, to her understandable fury, the runaway has secretly sublet their New York apartment. How do you think this edgy situation unfolds?

The bloke turns out to be a serial child-murderer who leaves bits of chopped-up 11-year-old all over the bright Manhattan furniture? No. Mrs Crosby, the landlady who sings big-hearted songs and dispenses big-hearted advice, has a nervous breakdown, sets fire to the apartment block, and ends up dancing on the ashes of its occupants? Wrong again. There were moments, I confess, when I hoped that might be the denouement; but I was forgetting the peculiar physics of Broadway musicals. If a show can be made more sentimental than the most sentimental original, no force in nature can stop it.

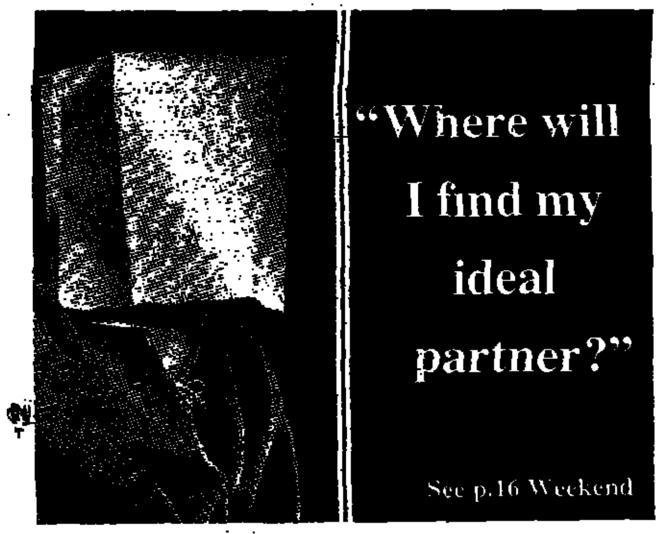
This great truth is evident almost as soon as the orchestra is whisked up and behind the Manhattan skyline, to be replaced by what, given the characters' straitened circumstances, seems an absurdly jolly flat. In the film Richard Dreyfuss, playing the aspiring actor Elliot, arrived there in an awful rainstorm, looking like an exhausted blend of fisherman and herring. Well, there may have been a tiny crack of stage thunder, but Gary Wilmot's Eliot is dry, neat, and in every respect the affable, laid-back and weatherproof fellow he is to remain.

Need I go on? Yes, because the show will doubtless entertain those prepared to switch off their native cynicism and succumb to Simon's quip-laden whimsy and Marvin Hamlisch's likeable, if unmemorable, tunes. There is a moderately funny scene in which an East European director makes poor Wilmot play Richard III as a flamboyant gay with an all-pink train, hat and feather, and a better one in which he brings fresh invention to the old routine of the drunk struggling with his door key. There is a nice number in which his enforced flatmate, Ann Crumb's Paula, desperately tries to reanimate her career as a dancer, but cannot keep up with the brash whirls and twirls of what's otherwise a shamefully underused chorus.

But most of the evening is pretty predictable. Take Broadway's version of Beatrice and Benedick, add one of those precociously wise children that seem to litter New York, and wait for a healing duet, not between man and woman, but between man and kid: "You're going to see the world from your father's shoulders"; "You're going to see the world through your daughter's eyes". At this point Wilmot's natural geniality is so strong I am tempted to rechristen him with the mistyping I made and corrected a moment ago: Gary Wilmost.

> ‘The evening left me feeling badly Simonised’

I will make no cheap jokes about Crumb, who matches Marsha Mason's movie performance snap for snap and smile for smile. But I'm afraid the evening left me feeling badly Simonised. "You did all that for me?" asks Crumb, thrilled to be fêted with balloons and champagne on the roof. "No, I'm staying too," retorts Wilmot from inside his white tuxedo. There's a kind of wry banter that purports to desentimentalise a sentimental situation but, because it is so self-conscious, does the very opposite. It is very Broadway. It is very Neil Simon. There is too much of it here.



"Where will I find my ideal partner?"

See p.16 Weekend

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Is Tony Blair our answer to Helmut Kohl?

Daniel Johnson says the Labour leader is really a Christian Democrat

The Tory photomontage depicting Tony Blair as a ventriloquist's dummy on Helmut Kohl's knee is a cruel caricature. The German Chancellor certainly did not find the Labour leader easy to manipulate when they last met: Herr Kohl apparently told friends that he was disappointed by Mr Blair's lack of European idealism. But Chancellor Kohl is far more hostile to John Major and Thatcherism: the Kohl-bashing Tory campaign merely adds insult to mutual injury. And Tony Blair's ideological odyssey has taken him so far from his party's roots on the Left that, from a European perspective, he is now a man of the centre-right.

Helmut Kohl's decision to stand for another term in 1998 — perhaps the most important news of the campaign so far — has increased the likelihood that the single currency will go ahead. Herr Kohl, the godfather of the euro, now expects to attend the birth in 1999, and may well see monetary union through the first, and most dangerous, three years of its infancy. Herr Kohl's presence at the christening feast makes it even less plausible that Tony Blair should wish to play the part of the wicked fairy.

For nearly a decade, King Kohl's crown prince has been Wolfgang Schäuble. They share with the Gaullist French President, Jacques Chirac, a visceral dislike of "Anglo-Saxon solutions". In a recent interview, Herr Schäuble roundly declared: "I know nobody in my party who subscribes to the caricature of politics that one associates with Margaret Thatcher..." Chancellor Kohl hopes to ensure that Christian Democracy still reigns in continental Europe even after he has handed over to Herr Schäuble, possibly before the 2002 election.

Whether that happens depends to some extent on the result of the British election. Seen from Germany, Tony Blair looks more like a Christian Democrat than a Social Democrat. The great names of the German left, Willy Brandt and Helmut Schmidt, have no more resonance for new Labour than Harold Wilson or Jim Callaghan. He is dismissive of the present Social Democrat party chairman, Oskar Lafontaine. Despite his friendship with Gerhard Schröder, the likely Social Democrat candidate for Chancellor, Mr Blair has gone out of his way during this election campaign to espouse the free-market, anti-union, privatising policies that are anathema to the German Left.

Mr Blair has, in fact, a good deal more in common with Herr Kohl. Both have an almost messianic belief in their vocation to lead their peoples. Both have taken their parties as close to the centre ground as they dare. They share a robust disregard for ideology, a gift for resoundingly vague catchphrases, a liking for patriotic oratory which goes against the grain for some of their supporters, and an iron grip on their party machines.

Both are influenced by Christian doctrines of solidarity, fairness and personal responsibility. In Mr Blair's case, this derives from the Anglican tradition typified by Archbishop William Temple, to whom we owe the term "welfare state"; in Herr Kohl's case, it stems from the social encyclicals of Popes Leo IX and Pius XI. Blair's policies owe much to the German "social market economy" (patented by the Christian Democrat Ludwig Erhard), in which the State avoids intervention in, or ownership of, the economy except by regulation and the correction of "market failures".

But if German Christian Democrats have a firm commitment to the welfare state (or *Sozialstaat*, as they prefer to call it), they do not see themselves as tools of organised labour. Last month's uproar in Germany, when the steel giant Krupp tried (and failed) to take over its rival Thyssen seemed bizarre to anyone accustomed to British or American capitalism. Two names with such historical resonance were bound to excite strong emotions; but the intervention of the trade unions, supported by Johannes Rau, the Social Democrat Prime Minister of North Rhine-Westphalia, frightened the Frankfurt banks into scuppering the deal. If he were to act like Herr Rau, Tony Blair would have to eat every word he has said about standing up to the trade unions. In German terms, Mr Blair is firmly on Herr Kohl's side of the industrial picket line.

And German industry is at last admitting that it has much to learn from the "English model". When the miners marched on Bonn recently and extracted concessions from Herr Kohl, alarm bells rang in German boardrooms. This week Hans-Olaf Henkel, president of the Federation of German Industry (BDI), even declared that Britain's economic record in the past decade had been superior in almost every respect to Germany's.

The same Herr Henkel recently paid Mr Blair a handsome compliment, after the latter had addressed German businessmen in Bonn. Labour, he said, was now more advanced than the German Social Democrats. One of the latter's elder statesmen, Peter Glotz, argues in *Prospect* magazine this month that "Blair's economic policies do not (yet) define a new project for the Left". But who says the Blairite project is for the Left at all? It makes more sense to see Tony Blair as the British answer to Helmut Kohl.

> Blair is firmly on Kohl's side of the industrial picket line

Who now remembers Chris Patten's attempt in the early Major years to redefine British Conservatism as Christian Democracy? Herr Kohl would have been more than happy with a Prime Minister Patten; the two speak regularly about Hong Kong. But Mr Blair has done with the Labour Party just what Mr Patten tried — and failed — to do with the Conservatives. During the intervening years, new Labour has repositioned itself squarely on the ground hitherto occupied by Mr Patten's liberal Tory tradition, and has even adopted its best slogan: One Nation.

If Tony Blair has embraced Christian Democracy, will Christian Democracy embrace him? For Helmut Kohl, the real test is Europe; and he has yet to be convinced of Tony Blair's commitment to the euro. Once Mr Blair is in office, though, the considerable force of the German Chancellor's personality will be brought to bear on him. Herr Kohl is, after all, the most successful politician in Europe. Mr Blair will be tempted to align Britain with Kohl's continental ascendancy, as Mr Major, too, did in 1991-92. If Herr Kohl wins next year's German election, Mr Blair's flirtation with Herr Schröder may quickly be forgotten.

Christian Democrats love to talk about community; and there may be a community of fate linking Tony Blair and Helmut Kohl. For Margaret Thatcher was nearly Herr Kohl's nemesis; she was the chief obstacle to his grand design. John Major has always seemed too much in her shadow for his liking. The enemies of Kohl's enemies, though, are his friends. When Prime Minister Blair pays his respects in Bonn after the election, he can expect a warm bear hug from a jovial Helmut Kohl. But once Mr Blair is clasped to the bosom of Christian Democracy, will the old man of the Rhine ever let him go?

The Bishop of Rochester, **Michael Nazir-Ali**, says the Church must be flexible on remarriage

Give the divorced their day in church

The marriage statistics are not good. Four out of ten weddings in this country will be followed by divorce. Many figures in public life, including members of the Royal Family, have been divorced and have remarried or may seek to remarry in the future. Even clergy and bishops are involved in marrying divorced people and sometimes in divorce itself.

The Church, in the meanwhile, continues to teach that marriage is for life, although the legal and pastoral situation is more complex. In the case of the Church of England, the formal teaching of the Convocations — that divorced people should not be remarried in church — continues to have force. The General Synod, on the other hand, has endorsed the principle that there are circumstances in which a divorced person may be married in church even during the lifetime of a former partner.

To add to this confusion, incumbents have the right, under statute law, to marry a divorced parishioner, though they are also bound by canonical obedience to seek the bishop's advice. It is no wonder that bishops' desks are crowded with requests for guidance.

In my time as Bishop of Rochester, I have tried to give coherence to my advice regarding the marriage of divorced people in church. I declared at the outset that I was not an "indissolublist", and that in certain circumstances there may be sufficient grounds for the breakdown of a marriage. The "exceptive clause" in the Gospel according to St Matthew (v,32 and xix,9), for instance, allows a divorce on the grounds of *porneia*. The precise meaning of this term has been a matter of debate but, at the least, it means "sexual evil". It is for the pastor, the theologian and the jurist to determine what constitutes sexual evil. There is a need, however, to be alert to the dangers of too rigid or too lax a view. Apart from adultery itself, I am inclined to the view that desertion (from the home or the marriage bed) and systematic cruelty may be included.

Some scholars believe that the exceptive clause is not part of the teaching of Christ. They say that it is a product of the early Christian community for whom St Matthew's Gospel was written. Even if this is the case, it still shows a need in the early Church for some such discipline, given its acceptance of Christ's teaching on marriage as normative (see Mark x, 1-12).

A few New Testament scholars hold that, while the exceptive clause allows for divorce under certain circumstances, it does not allow remarriage after divorce. It is difficult, however, to read the passages in this way, and there is a weight of opinion (including Erasmus and the Reformers) in the opposite scale.

In addition, there is the "Pauline privilege", where divorce seems to be permitted if an "unbelieving partner" is not willing to live any longer with the Christian partner (I Corinthians vii, 12-15). The Christian must do everything to make the marriage work. It is only if the "non-Christian" partner is unwilling to live in peace and takes the initiative in the breakup that the Christian may acquiesce in the dissolution of such a marriage.

It is sometimes the case that what appears to be a marriage is not that at all because there has been some defect of intention or consent from the beginning. This can arise if there has been coercion of or even undue influence on one of the parties. Or if there are serious psychological or physical defects, or a rejection of an essential aspect of the marriage. Finally, it is possible to make a judgment "in favour of the faith". This is when a divorced person has come to a new or renewed faith which has influenced their view of marriage.

In the situations so far, I have been able to advise clergy that they may marry divorced people in church after the necessary preparations, which reminds them of the life-long nature of marriage, and after an expression of penitence.

The Church has a vocation to be both prophetic and pastoral. It has to articulate clearly the Christian standard of marriage. This is no unattainable "ideal", but the way in which God intends us to live. Its abandonment is at the root of many personal and social problems in our society. Pastorally, the Church has to care for all those who have been hurt by divorce and, in certain circumstances, to prepare them for remarriage.

It is necessary, however, to be clear about the circumstances in which the Church will conduct the remarriage of divorced people. There cannot be a "free-for-all", and phrases such as "irretrievable breakdown" and "mutual consent" do not constitute sufficient grounds for divorce or for the marriage of divorced people in church.

"No-fault" divorce will make it harder for us to determine the exact circumstances leading up to the divorce — which is why some church leaders were opposed to it. The Church will, nevertheless, have to determine how a marriage broke up and provide appropriate pastoral support and care in the light of that knowledge.

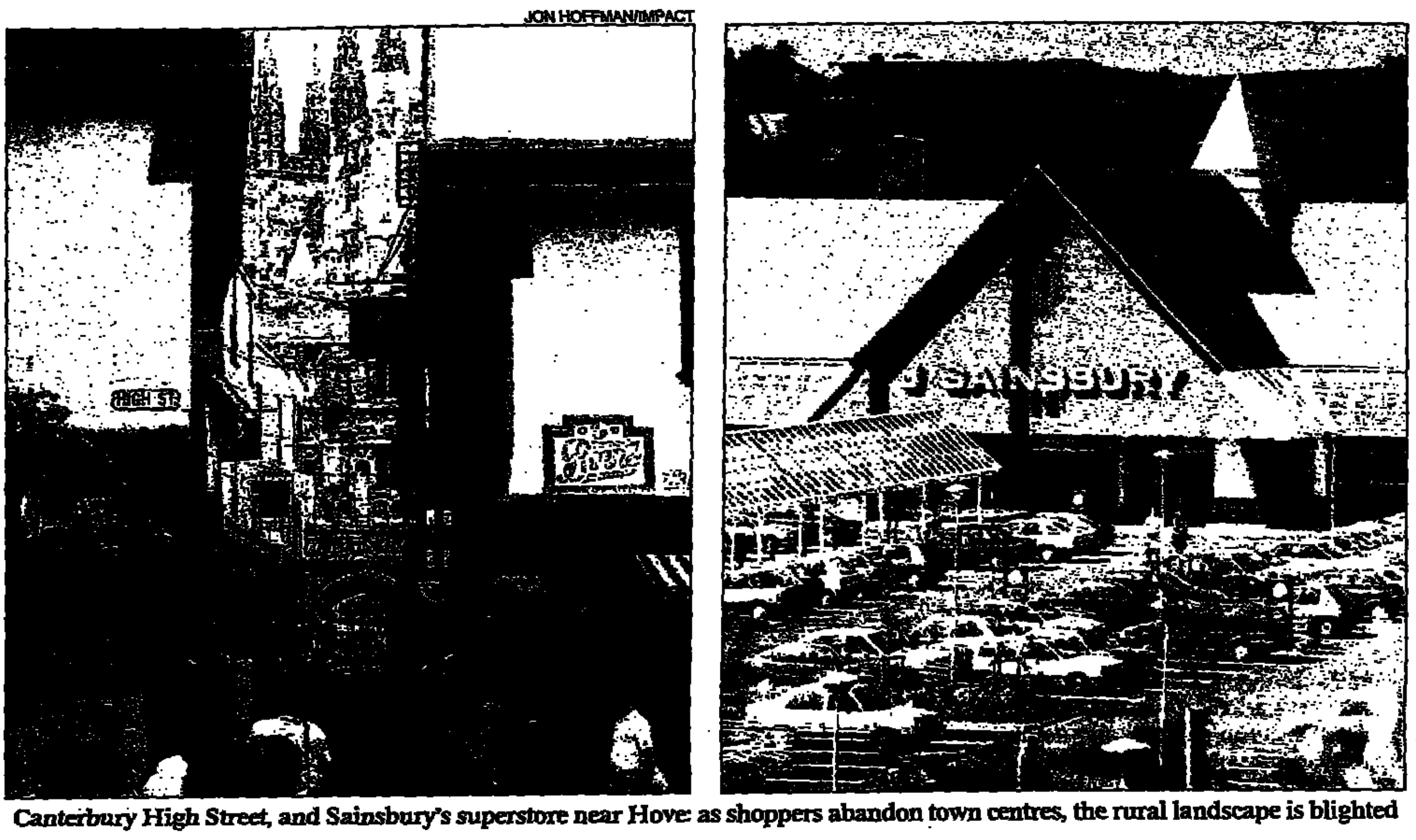
In certain, well-defined circumstances this may lead to remarriage in church for a divorced person. On the one hand, the Church should not be co-opted by the culture into endorsing what is happening in Western society. On the other hand, it has to be sensitive to the culture around it and to minister within that culture with both clarity and flexibility. That is the challenge for the Church today. Will it rise to the challenge?

Out of town, out of mind

We feel guilty about rural England — but go on ruining it

Simon Jenkins

JON HOFFMAN/IMPACT



Canterbury High Street, and Sainsbury's superstore near Hove: as shoppers abandon town centres, the rural landscape is blighted

The BBC's election coverage is now a self-regarding, interminable bore. But I offer a prize to the girl who was sent to push a microphone at a somnolent tramp. He told her to "Eff off." The microphone was rammed closer to his face. What did he think of the election? "Eff off," he said again. Then inspiration seized him. "It's effing tweedledum and effing tweedledee. Don't matter." This marriage of literature and philosophy was too much for the girl. She withdrew.

I would have argued the point. Some things do matter: for instance, the Chichester ring road. This road deserves to stand as a totem of Tory Britain. It will live on after assisted places, quota hopping and single currencies are long forgotten. The road is one of those known as "Ridley doughnuts", a circuit of out-of-town supermarkets, traffic jams and suburban estates with, inside them, an ancient town centre deserted and gasping for commercial breath. They were an ideological delight of the late Nicholas Ridley, the Tory Environment Secretary.

Twenty years ago Chichester was an attractive cathedral town. The great spire rose across water meadows to west and east. As in most continental towns, its rulers respected a cardinal planning principle, that the desires of people in general need guarding against the desires of some people in particular. Not any more. In the 1980s, out-of-town shopping was given free rein. Even if something can bring central Chichester back to life, its meadows are gone and suburbia will stain its surroundings for ever.

Eras are rarely remembered for what most obsessed politicians at the time. Victorian Britain was convulsed over Catholic emancipation and Home Rule. We think of it as a nation of railways and Empire. I believe the Tory years will be recalled not for trade union reform or privatisation but for how a rural landscape was bespattered with housing estates and shopping centres. The cathedrals of Mrs Thatcher's Britain will be St-Tesco's-on-the-Roundabout and St-Sainsbury's-on-the-Interchange.

What distinguishes land-use planning from the general run of government activity is that its outcomes are irrevocable. Wreck a school, a hospital or a railway, and money can always patch it together again. Concrete over the countryside and it stays concreted. The farmland turned into military bases in the Second World War will never be returned. They will become rural slums because "the highest price" is assumed to be what the public want for them — though the public is not asked.

The external costs of rural sprawl include traffic congestion, impoverished and crime-ridden city centres, subsidised urban renewal and the lost amenity of the woods and fields. These costs are real and some of them must eventually be met. A recent Bank of America report on California, template for Tory land-use policies, warned that unregulated land use could exact an exorbitant price: "Unchecked sprawl has shifted from an engine of California's growth to a force that now threatens to inhibit growth and degrade the quality of our life."

A year ago the three party leaders signed a letter to *The Times* pledging collective support for "the countryside". The letter repeated one sent by their predecessors in 1929. The Cambridge economist J.B. Cullingworth replied that the 1929 letter was totally cynical. It was followed by an unplanned and unprecedented seizure of land for suburban sprawl. Was the present letter as cynical? The answer is yes, according to a searing report this week from the Council for the Protection of Rural England.

Country development is still in the same primitive state that roads policy was until the Transport Department's U-turn a year ago. Ministers now accept that demand for road space cannot be met without limit. It must be constrained both physically and by price. The Transport Minister, Steven Norris, has admitted that the Newbury bypass was the wrong solution and the "fly-over option" the right one. Does this mean that we might one day close the road, replant the trees and build the fly-overs? When other professions make such mistakes, they get sued for negligence or struck off. Ministers just get peerages.

The Environment Department is like the old Transport Department. It concocts figures of housing "need" that must be met, irrespective of price or external cost. Officials claim that 4.4 million new houses are needed by 2016, of which 40,000 must be in Berkshire, 60,000 in Hampshire and so on. This is the madness which, in the 1980s, saw 120,000 acres of countryside disappear, while 140,000 acres of developed land lay unused in towns and cities. Rural land was consumed because it was cheap to the purchaser, not the taxpayer or the land-user.

Building on green fields is bound to appeal to new residents wishing to enjoy "country living" while it lasts, and to drive to one of rural England's 1,000 superstores. I know of no calculation of the cost of this policy. The Government claims to have changed heart, in the direction of more urban and less car-borne development. John Gummer's *Green Manifesto* turns its back on an entire decade of folly. Yet he is considering "bolt-on" towns at Peterborough, Swindon and Bristol, "factory stores" outside Street, Mansfield and Hartlepool, and a new town at Micheldever. Hampshire will be suburbanised from Basingstoke to the edge of the New Forest. Over the past decade a city the size of Bristol was built in the English country each year. According to the CPRE, the next decade will see that rate rise to a city the size of Greater London.

Is this really what Britain wants? There is no turning back. Polling indicates a deep affection for visiting and enjoying the countryside among the majority of Britons. Yet there is no way for market pricing to reflect this preference. The delight given to walkers, cyclists, fishermen, cottage owners, even drivers, by the experience of the landscape is not quantifiable. It may lie easy on the human spirit or in the pen of a Wordsworth or a Ruskin. But such romanticism has no language in common with market economics. Priorities must be determined by democracy.

I notice that British politicians are tougher on the environment the farther that environment is from home. Mrs Thatcher worried about North Sea discharges. She was fierce on tropical rain forest and a tyrant in the upper atmosphere. But in the English countryside she was putty in the hands of the House Builders Federation.

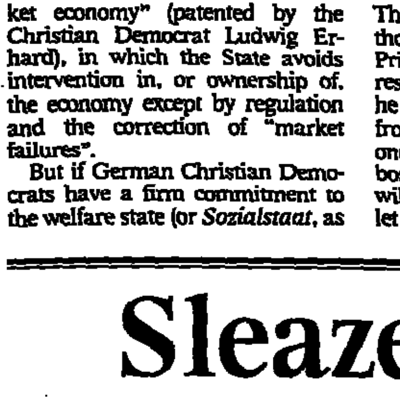
The corniest reason for this disregard is that politicians (and the media) live in London. They do not go to the country except to nurse a constituency. They know the French or Italian landscape, since that is where they holiday. I doubt if one in a hundred MPs has actually seen the wind farms they vote through Parliament. One MP was enraged at the routing of a high speed train through the Dordogne Valley, yet unconcerned by the Winchester bypass. To an English politician the English provinces are a foreign country.

I believe many Tory voters are vaguely ashamed of what was done to rural Britain in the 1980s. They hope a Labour vote will relieve their guilt, will expiate the unacceptable face of landscape laisser faire. They can pocket the cash and feel good by throwing the philistines out. New Labour, old guilt. But will new Labour honour the mandate, and stop wrecking rural Britain? The manifesto is silent.

I ask, read and listen. But the noise of the hunt is elsewhere. Perhaps the tramp was right.

Sleaze pie

THE BATTLE for Tatton has taken an unexpected and ludicrous turn. The constituency's self-satisfied Conservative Neil Hamilton is planning to take his fight against the pious anti-corruption man Martin Bell into the kitchen.



"No idea when I'll be home... These bombs cause chaos"

Mr Hamilton has agreed to a request from Carlton Television to appear on a cookery programme to be broadcast alongside a cooking slot presented by Martin Bell.

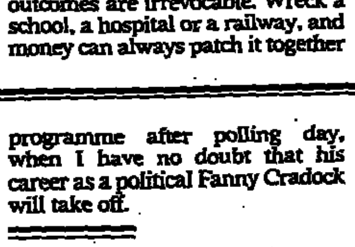
The ridiculous concoction has come about because Carlton has already recorded a programme in its *Can't Stand the Heat* series, with Mr Bell as a guest. It decided not to broadcast his culinary endeavours during the election campaign, however, for fear that recipes involving stinging nettles and dandelion leaves might influence the voters.

Carlton approached Mr Hamilton to see if he would make a cookery programme, thereby balancing the kitchen politics. Mr Hamilton readily agreed: "I would be delighted, to do an interview for your Carlton Food Network, and could offer several interesting variations on the food theme."

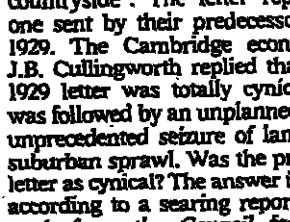
Mr Hamilton will make the programme after polling day, when I have no doubt that his career as a political Fanny Cradock will take off.

On the boards

AFTER life as Chancellor Kohl's puppet in the Tory Party's latest advertising campaign, Tony Blair is to suffer again on our billboards. Consolation comes only with the knowledge that John Major is to be pilloried in a similar fashion.



Cartoon caper — Major and Blair as teenage idiots



Next week, as part of Rock the Vote's advertising campaign to encourage young people to go to the polls, the Tory and Labour leaders will be portrayed respectively as Beavis and Butt-head, the moronic cartoon teenagers who lead a frustrated life watching pop videos.

Underneath the cartoon, runs the caption: "Use your vote. You know they will use theirs." Paddy Ashdown is said to have complained already at not being included in the poster as one of this sad American duo.

Unloading

THERE is aftershave on the carpet in the world of men's magazines with the news that James Brown, the founding editor of *Loaded*, is off to edit *GQ*. It is as if the editor of the *Daily Sport* had been made editor of *The Economist*.

Brown, 31, launched his magazine in 1994 as the apotheosis of new laddishness with endless Page Three girls, footballers and back-row irreverence. The latest issue has features on the glamour model Joanne Guest in the skimpiest of warm-weather gear; on Manchester United and on lap-dancing in Texas.

Angus MacKinnon, who has edited *GQ* since the sudden death in 1995 of the prodigiously hedonistic American Michael Vermeulen, resigned after some lengthy conversations with his managing director, the aggressively old lad Nicholas "Cufflinks" Coleridge.

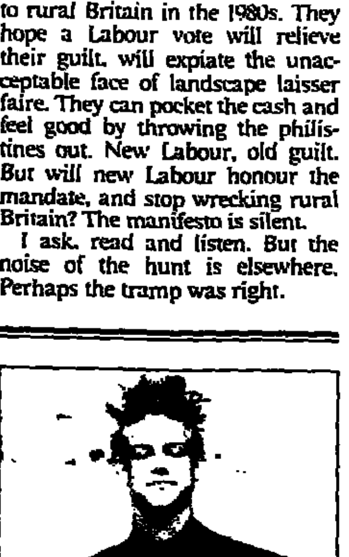
Cufflinks and Brown should make an interesting pair. As Brown put it yesterday: "Others will say I would be have to be mad to leave the *Loaded* job, but as the staff themselves will confirm — I am."

Head to head

THE PERILS of accommodating two proprietors with opposing political views will be only too evident in tomorrow's *Express* newspaper. Lord Hollick of Notting Hill, bearded Blairite and chief executive of United News & Media which owns the *Express*, is planning a thundering editorial in support of new Labour.

On the opposite page, Lord Stevens of Ludgate, chairman of United News & Media, is planning to bay for the Tories.

- *The good times may have returned for L'Artiste Assoiffé, a restaurant in Notting Hill, west London, once famous for regulars such as Eric Clapton and David Bowie. It has been bought by Paul Smith, one of Britain's most successful clothes designers. His plans for it are not yet clear, but if he does use it as his first venture into restaurants, expect straight lines, garish colours and the dull whiff of eau de toilette.*



Taking over: Smith's models

P·H·S

PLEASE SEND FLOWERS

The Conservatives prepare for Opposition

Seven days ago the Labour Party looked rattled: manifesto promises were rewritten and the opinion polls were slipping. It appeared just possible to Tory optimists that John Major might pull off an improbable victory. This week those hopes are ashes again. The Conservative Party is transforming itself around its policy towards Europe: some individual Tory MPs are more electable than they were: but the Government as a whole (if it can be called a whole) is massively less electable. For the Tories to win this election from here would require a miracle. Whether or not Tony Blair sits on Herr Kohl's knee, he will almost certainly be the one who meets the German leader in Amsterdam.

This has been a fundamental week in the history of the Conservative Party, a week that has summed up much about the failures of the last five years and the possibility of a brighter future. In a curious sense, the electorate has had more notice of what the party would do if it won the election after next than it does about this one. We have seen the future and it is profoundly sceptical. There remains, however, the small matter of May 1, 1997. Most Conservatives are now resigned, however reluctantly, to the probability of defeat. Some will secretly welcome it.

Defeat like death is not made easier by prior advertisement. It will be a traumatic experience for those who have sat for so long on the government benches. The Conservative Party has held power for 67 years since 1900: 18 of those in its current period of office. It is a measure of the Conservative command of this century, that it has been removed and replaced by a majority Liberal or Labour Administration on only three occasions. Each time, though, it took an additional election loss before the party regained office.

Conservatives are not comfortable creatures in opposition. In truth their record there is dismal. Until Margaret Thatcher, the Labour Party had largely dictated the direction of policy despite only two periods of secure majority government. In part this reflected the relative failure of the demoralised Tories. The Conservatives have usually blamed the public for ingratitude and then each other for incompetence. Too often, the party has conspicuously refused to analyse the reasons for its rejection.

Such an introspective performance after this polling day would not serve the national interest. The Labour Party has sailed through this campaign with much scrutiny but little clarity of response. When the spotlight has found its mark, the appearance has been often poor. Mr Blair has managed to square the messages of "time for a change" and "we will not change that much" without suffering for their contradictions. On Europe and numerous other questions he has retained a strategic ambiguity. There remains a large element of mystery about what he will claim for a mandate. In office, the country, indeed Labour itself, would need him to be tested by the Tories.

The Conservatives should recognise the sources of their past triumphs. From Lord Salisbury to Lady Thatcher these have been based on three factors. For at least one hundred years it has been the party of union and nation. This is not an aggressive or xenophobic force but one that appreciates the sense of identity in these islands. That appeal has allowed Conservatives to reach across class, creed, and constituencies. Second, the Tories have usually been more unified than their opponents. Not since 1846 have they formally split. Nor since 1906 has there been a real schism. Finally, the Conservatives have been able to claim competence in the exercise of power.

These elements have proved irreconcilable with membership of the ERM, the Maastricht treaty, and the prospective single currency. The party beyond Westminster has worked that out and declared independence from its hierarchy. The questions concerning the leadership or the timing of that contest are important but secondary to the Tories rediscovering their sense of place and purpose. There lies the road both to effective opposition and electoral restoration. This week may well have witnessed the end of an era. The Conservatives must look back as well as forwards to find their future.

A POLL FOR CHIRAC

The prospect of elections on both sides of the Channel

After days of rumour, leaks and innuendo, President Chirac is expected this weekend to decide a question of crucial importance to his authority and to the future of European economic and monetary union: whether to dissolve the National Assembly and call early elections. Those urging him to do so were yesterday confident that they would prevail, and that a snap election will be called on June 1, with the second round a week later. Unusually, therefore, electioning may be in full swing on both sides of the Channel for the rest of this month.

President Chirac, who alone can call an election ahead of the scheduled date in March, now has overwhelming reasons for doing so. His popularity is still low, and Alain Juppé, his Prime Minister, remains one of the least popular in postwar politics. But the polls for both are improving. The Gaullists and their UDF allies in the 577-seat Assembly now have a massive majority, which M Chirac knows cannot be maintained. But he probably reckons that the loss of seats would be smaller now than later.

M Chirac is looking to both his Left and his Right. On the Left, the Socialists are in disarray. Still strongly associated with the Mitterrand era, they are blackened by association with the details now emerging of scandals and wrong-doing during the years of Socialist rule, especially the illegal telephone bugging of political opponents, journalists and celebrities.

The Gaullists are urging the Government to take advantage of this confusion. On the Right, the National Front presents a more potent threat. With a string of local victories, especially in the South, it is playing on racial prejudice, unemployment and a general malaise to present itself as a disciplined force for the disaffected. The Government has no coherent strategy for blunting its appeal, and therefore believes that a quick election may catch the Right unawares.

By far the strongest reason for holding elections now, however, is the iron logic of France's support for EMU. Figures leaked from the Finance Ministry recently show that next year France is likely to overshoot the Maastricht 3 per cent limit on budget deficits, with a deficit ranging from 3.8 to 4.5 per cent in the worst-case scenario. This will force the Juppé Government into a new and savage round of austerity cuts. If these are put in place this autumn, France is guaranteed another winter of discontent. To ask for voters' support two months later would be political suicide.

The decision to call a pre-term election, however, is not easy. Because the electorate knows that M Chirac wants to secure a Gaullist majority to pave the way for harsh budget cuts, such a move could have the opposite effect, and bolster the Socialists. While nominally supporting EMU, they have recently added so many conditions that it would be almost impossible for the rest of the EU to proceed with the project. In calling an election, therefore, M Chirac would risk not only his party's majority but the future of his cherished EMU. And that, in turn, would have momentous consequences for the rest of Europe — not least, Britain.

BULLDOGS AND BLOODHOUNDS

All but the purists will welcome the new peers

For 21 members of the last House of Commons a permanent place in Parliament has already been assured. A score of retiring MPs, although the adjective may not seem altogether appropriate in the case of some such as Roy Hattersley, will be swapping the green benches for the red this May.

Her Majesty has decided to elevate to the peerage some of the last Parliament's most distinguished names, and some who are less well known outside the precincts of power but no less deserving of honour. For the rationalists of Charter 88 such whimsical exercise of the royal prerogative will offend against pure democratic principles. The rest of us, who can sleep happy at night despite the absence of a truly proportional voting system for the Ambridge Parochial Church Council, will be delighted to see these sage magnificoes saved for the nation.

It is difficult to devise a perfect second chamber, partly because the need for a revising house springs from a recognition of human imperfection. There is no Parliament, however elegant its voting system, however gifted at Politics, Philosophy and Economics its members, which cannot benefit from older heads tugging at the sleeve as the laws are framed.

Those grave seniors need not be belted earls; indeed some of those who look at the world through mullioned windows and across broad acres are probably better employed cultivating land than a reputation for wisdom. Whatever their origins, a second chamber needs those for whom public service has been a vocation, not a career. Once ambition's embers have cooled then yesterday's ministers can be the shrewdest guardians of the constitution's health.

It is not only ministers whose contributions count. The Upper House will certainly benefit from the experience of Sir Patrick Mayhew and Douglas Hurd, who held high office without ever having given the impression of lusting for it. The second chamber should not, however, become an extension of the Cavalry and Guards' Club. The Lords also benefits by recruiting from the Sergeants' Mess and the awkward squad.

The presence in their Lordships' House of the gloriously and proudly proletarian Don Dixon may, at first, seem as incongruous as Paul Gascoigne at All Souls. But the former Labour MP for Jarrow and ruthless whip is an unalloyed asset. David Alton, although also once a whip, is of a very different pedigree. He is bloodhound to Dixon's bulldog. A determined, principled lone campaigner, he has forced Parliament to think hard on moral issues.

The House of Lords is flawed, anachronistic, eccentrically constituted, bizarrely ordered and the object of bewilderment abroad. Reform will come, sooner or later. The nature of change in the Lords is still a matter for dispute, but what should not be is the welcome due to its newest members.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Britain as 'a loser' outside Europe

From Mr Roy Hattersley, Lord Howe of Aberavon and Sir David Steel

Sir, Following the MORI poll reported in *The Times* on Thursday, it is important to underline the view of the three main political party leaders that Britain would be a loser outside Europe. We endorse that view.

Millions of British jobs depend on trade with Europe, trade which has flourished thanks to the EU's single market, the largest free-trade zone in the world.

Leaving Europe would damage that trade, increase business costs, deter investment from abroad and jeopardise employment here in Britain.

Britain's best opportunity to remain a global power is as a strong nation in a strong Europe. We should be leading Europe, not leaving it.

Yours etc,
ROY HATTERSLEY,
GEOFFREY HOWE,
DAVID STEEL,
European Movement
— United Kingdom,
Dean Bradley House,
52 Horseferry Road, SW1.
April 18.

Election 97

From Mr Norman Jenkins

Sir, The more senior of my acquaintance, whatever their political leanings, appear in the main to accept the inevitability of a change of government. Not because the current one has necessarily failed us but because "It's Buggins's turn; let someone else have a go to see if it can be done better".

It can't — if history is anything at all to go by. The last socialist government had to be thrown out neck and crop; incapable of controlling its lunatic fringe, its disastrous policies made its downfall inevitable.

The achievement of the last 18 years has been slow, painful and step by step of necessity, modifying programmes as unforeseeable pressures arose. Today's level of achievement and stability is virtually unprecedented. A change of government would, I believe, subject both the achievement and its further development to unbearable strain.

Buggins's turn? B— Buggins.

Yours very truly,
NORMAN JENKINS,
Whitehill,
Ewshot, Farnham, Surrey.
April 17.

From Mr H. S. Muirhead

Sir, A healthy democracy requires a realistic choice. The longer one party remains in power the greater the propensity, as in Japan, for "sleaze", complacency, a weak Opposition, and eventually an ineffective successor.

At each election the governing party must advance the stronger arguments in order to justify its re-election, rather than accepting "change for change's sake".

By that criterion, the Tories do not impress; Labour seems sensible enough; Sir James Goldsmith offers a decision on Europe. In 1997 there seems no compelling reason to vote Tory.

Yours faithfully,
HUGH MUIRHEAD
(Director),
Landmark Publishing Ltd,
Waterloo House, 12 Compton,
Ashbourne, Derbyshire.
April 15.

From Mr Simon Bevan

Sir, I wonder if a Labour government intends to levy a windfall tax on those businesses it privatises and, if so, whether this would be done before or after privatisation. If after, I wonder whether the amount would be mentioned in the prospectus and how it would be calculated.

Yours faithfully,
SIMON BEVAN,
Cartgate, Hall Park,
Brixworth, Northampton.
April 16.

From Mr Michael Hill

Sir, The pundits have been using the term "floating voter" for several elections now, but is this the first election in which we are experiencing a "floating party"?

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL HILL,
45 Elizabeth Road, Moseley,
Birmingham, West Midlands.
April 17.

Electoral law

From the Deputy Chief Executive of the London Borough of Camden

Sir, Camden Council will not be breaking electoral law (Diary, April 8) by displaying directions for voters in languages other than English or Welsh inside our polling stations.

The multi-lingual information will be outside polling stations — with the aim of including as many members of the local community as we can in the democratic process. That is perfectly in order under electoral law.

Yours faithfully,
AMANDA KELLY,
Deputy Chief Executive and
Borough Solicitor,
London Borough of Camden,
Town Hall, Judd Street, WC1.

Church's obligations on baptism

From the Reverend J. D. Mitson

Sir, The Archbishop of Canterbury is quoted as saying (report, April 14) that parents who do not attend church should not be prevented from bringing children to baptism. In fact, of course, there is a legal obligation on clergy in the Church of England to baptise any child within their cure (canon B22).

Thus any minister who refuses a baptismal request simply because the parents do not attend church is misrepresenting the legal position. He is in breach of canon law and indeed the oath of canonical obedience taken by him both on ordination and on any appointment to the benefice.

Yours faithfully,
J. D. MITSON
(Registrar), Diocese of
St Edmundsbury & Ipswich,
24-26 Museum Street,
Ipswich, Suffolk.
April 16.

From the Reverend Andrew P. de Berry

Sir, It is the baptism service itself (now happily under revision) which lies at the root of the problem. Not only is infant baptism anachronistic, with no scriptural precedent; it requires nonchurchgoing parents and godparents, in effect, to perjure themselves by its stipulations.

For those who have no intention of going to church (the vast majority from my experience), the service is replete with injunctions to bring the child to church, instruct it in the arduous duties of following Christ, and encourage it onwards to confirmation.

Yours,
ANDREW de BERRY,
The Vicarage, Southwell Road,
Thurgarton, Nottinghamshire.
April 14.

From Mrs Beryl Bye

Sir, I know of no churches which refuse to allow "outsiders" to bring a child for baptism. However, many priests, before agreeing to perform the ceremony, invite parents and godparents to attend a short course designed to help them understand the seriousness of the promises they will be making on behalf of themselves and the child.

Is this unreasonable?

Yours faithfully,
BERYL BYE,
Cotswold, Priory Lane,
Bishops Cleeve, Gloucestershire.
April 14.

St Helena's discontents

From Sir Nicholas Bonsor, Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Sir, We are fully aware of, and sympathise with, the strength of feeling on St Helena about the island's difficult economic circumstances and isolation (letters, April 18) and are tackling these problems on a broad front.

We have been working with the island's Government in its efforts to attract inward investment. Last year a British company established a fishing operation in the island, and in March I established a business forum to encourage more UK companies to invest in the local economy. Promoting private-sector development is the central plank to our strategy and we hope that more companies will follow suit in looking at the opportunities for investment in the island.

As your recent coverage has highlighted (reports, April 16 and 17; leading article, April 16), the St Helenians also want greater access to the UK. We have recently abolished the upper age limit on the training and work experience scheme which allows them valuable opportunity to obtain new skills that are only available in this country.

We are also actively looking at ways to allow more islanders to find employment in the UK. However, the solution does not lie solely in greater access to the UK. The majority of St Helenians wish to stay on the island: hence our determination to help them achieve greater self-sufficiency, and a stronger all-round economy.

Meanwhile, we have agreed with the St Helenians a substantial package of aid worth £26 million over the next three years, which includes making it possible for the *RMS St Helena* to continue to provide the only regular transport link to the island. We are working closely with the island's Government on an important programme of reform to help develop the private sector and improve the efficiency of the public sector. And we are in parallel investigating the possibilities of opening Ascension Island to provide a gateway to St Helena, thus improving communication links.

I was sorry to see (report, April 16) that there has been criticism of the Governor, David Smallman. He has a difficult task and clearly cannot always satisfy all interested parties. As you point out, his decision to announce new elections followed a request from local councillors and he will return to the island well before the election campaign begins.

Your April 17 report contains extracts from a letter from Councillor Bobby Robertson to you. We treat seriously any concerns raised by councillors. On the specific point of the constitution, we have invited the St Helena Government to send us their views on the changes they feel necessary. We will give these full and serious consideration.

Yours faithfully,
NICHOLAS BONSOR,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office,
Whitehall, SW1.
April 17.

Field sports

From the Secretary of the British Equestrian Trade Association

Sir, Mr Bernard Selwyn (letter, April 11) suggests that it would be helpful to have a detailed breakdown of employment figures in relation to country sports. Considerable research has recently been conducted on this issue.

Our 1996 survey showed that in the equestrian industry between 7,000 and 9,000 full-time jobs are directly dependent on fox hunting. These are jobs in retail saddlers, distributors and manufacturers of equestrian products, feed merchants, farriers, vets and riding establishments.

The Campaign for Hunting has established that 3,000 grooms are likely to lose their jobs should hunting be banned, while the Game Conservancy Survey of Hunts believes that the loss of a further 910 jobs, of those employed by the hunts themselves, will be the inevitable result of a ban. An estimated 1,000 jobs in hotels and garages, generated by hunts and their supporters, would also be affected.

Going wider than fox hunting, Cobham Resource Consultants produced a report earlier this year, which found that field sports generate direct employment equivalent to 60,160 full-time jobs, with indirect employment equivalent to a further 30,809 jobs.

Yours faithfully,
ANTONY WAKEHAM, Secretary,
British Equestrian Trade Association,
Wothersome Grange, Bramham,
Wetherby, West Yorkshire.

From Mr Christopher Mant

Sir, I am surprised by William Rees-Mogg failing to give weight to the voting intentions of the massive pro-field sports lobby in his analysis of Somerset voting (article, "How the wavering West may be won", April 14).

For many in this county, the election on May 1 is a single issue — for or against hunting. The Labour position is clear. The Liberal Democrats' attempt to ban stag hunting on Over Stowey common was their first priority on gaining power in the county council.

The pro-field sports lobby is therefore bound to support the Conservatives.

Yours faithfully,
CHRISTOPHER MANT,
4 Tormynton Road,
Worle,
Weston-super-Mare, Somerset.
April 15.

From Mr A. Varlaam

Sir, It is beyond belief that a research study was needed to show that deer do not enjoy being hunted by hounds (letters, April 15).

The money would have been better spent on studying the mental processes of those who believe that such conveniently masochistic species of animals actually exist.

Yours sincerely,
A. VARLAAM,
2 Ellerton Road, Wandsworth, SW18.
April 15.

Record births

From Dr Peter McCree

Sir, Further to Professor Sir John Dewhurst's reference to the birth of a stillborn child weighing 23lb 12oz (letter, April 16), Fergusson, Taylor and Watson, in *Records and Curiosities in Obstetrics and Gynaecology*, published by Baillière Tindall, 1982, record a child weighing 24lb 4oz born to Mrs Saadet Cor in Ceyhan, southern Turkey on June 3, 1961. There are also references to a baby of 24lb delivered in London by a Dr Mosse on an unknown date and one of 21lb born on Christmas Day, 1852 in Torpoint, Cornwall.

Interestingly, the foreword to this fascinating book was written by Professor Sir John Dewhurst himself.

Yours faithfully,
PETER McCREE,
Cedar Lodge, Firs Close, Stafford.

Romantic notions

From Mr S. E. Clover

Sir, I note with concern that 29 per cent of French women are put off by men "who carefully fold their clothes before slipping between the sheets" (report, April 17). In the same report I learn that Emma Bovary, the 19th-century romantic heroine, dreamed of "days of love unfolding without end".

Vive la France.

Yours faithfully,
STEPHEN CLOVER,
Crwcwd,
Llanrhaedr, Denbighshire.
April 17.

Weekend Money letters, page 39

Letters for publication may be faxed to 0171-782 5046.

The last 'proper' cavalry charge

From the Marquess of Anglesey

Sir, General Friedberger's statement (letter, March 31; see also letters, April 5 and 8) that the 20th Hussars, at Gebze in Turkey in 1920, were the very last full regular British cavalry regiment to charge an enemy is unassailable.

In deciding which were the last charges by auxiliary and irregular mounted units in the British service there are greater difficulties. These stem less from their dates than from the definition of the word charge. I take it to mean, for the purposes of this debate, an assault upon an armed enemy who makes an attempt to resist it. Whether it can be rightly called a charge when the enemy flees before any contact is made is a nice point.

Mr John Lockwood (letter, April 8) may be correct in claiming that the two yeomanry regiments which formed part of the 5th Cavalry Brigade engaged in 1941 with the Vichy French in Syria were the last of the yeomanry to charge. However, it has been generally accepted hitherto that the two regiments were on three separate occasions literally on the point of charging when the enemy decided to fly before the yeomanry's swords could perform their task. Mr Lockwood states that the French opened fire, but without more than slight effect.

Whether these qualify as charges proper or not, there are anyway three later claimants for the last charge. On March 19, 1942, north of Rangoon, a detachment of some 50 Sikhs of the Burma Frontier Force rode into an ambush. Rather than surrender to the Japanese, its leader, Captain Arthur Sandeman of the Central India Horse, decided to charge. Very few survived the enemy's machine-gun fire to tell the tale. That was without question a very real charge.

In 1944 a squadron of the Gwalior Lancers made what seems to have been a true charge in the Arakan region of Burma, while in 1953 a section of Kenya's Northern Frontier Tribal Police charged a large, well-armed Mau Mau gang, killing the lot. Whether this was a military or a police action is a moot point.

It looks therefore as if Sandeman's suicidal charge in 1942 and that of the Gwalior Lancers in 1944 must contend for the distinction of being the last British mounted charge — unless of course further evidence comes to light.

Yours faithfully,
ANGLESEY,
Plas Newydd,
Llanfairpwll, Anglesey.
April 9.

Pedestrian crossings

From Dr Douglas Stewart

Sir, Zebra crossings not only alert drivers (letters, April 16 and 17); their striped markings also provide a visual scale which aids judgment of distance to pedestrians, especially children.

Most countries make far more liberal use of zebra markings than Britain, which may be the main reason that our child pedestrians have the worst casualty rate in Europe.

Yours faithfully,
DOUGLAS STEWART,
University of Aberdeen,
Department of Engineering,
Fraser Noble Building,
King's College, Aberdeen.
April 18.

Right for the job?

From Mr George Collard

Sir, The latest research appears to show that, in dealing with difficult situations, the intuitive approach, or "gut reaction", produces better results than the practical, well thought out response.

Some years ago, the late Canon Professor H. E. W. Turner of Durham informed me that women were more intuitive creatures than men, who were more practical and methodical.

If both these propositions are true, wouldn't it be better if women were responsible for making all decisions and men responsible for carrying them out?

Yours truly,
G. COLLARD,
23 Carrick Road,
Curzon Park, Chester.
April 15.

Without words

From Mrs Judy Astley

Sir, Babyhood is not the only time that humans resort to communicating in sign language (article, April 15). Scientists would do well to come to my house and study "The teenager: non-verbal language skills".

The more common "signs" include the slouch n' scowl, which inevitably means denial, as in "No, of course I don't have any homework".

Eyes to ceiling/despairing shake of head means "Parents are a sad waste of space".

Then there is the smile and hover technique, by which hanging around the kitchen, generously rinsing one plate and grinning in a sickly way can only be interpreted as "I require money".

Yours faithfully,
JUDY ASTLEY,
Venton Gannel, Trelowarren,
Mawgan, Helston, Cornwall.
April 17.

COURT CIRCULAR

WINDSOR CASTLE
April 18: The Duke of Edinburgh this evening attended The Queen's Body Guard of the Yeomen of the Guard Roger Monk Dinner at the Union Jack Club, Sandell Street, London SE1.

His Royal Highness, Grand Master, the Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators, was represented by Mr Ronald Bridge (Master) at the Service of Thanksgiving for the Life of Air Marshal Sir Denis Crowley-Milling which was held in St Clement Danes, Strand, London WC2, this morning.

The Duke and Duchess of Kent were represented by Lieutenant Commander Sir Richard Buckley.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
April 18: The Duke of York this morning arrived at Gatwick Airport, London, from Zimbabwe.

Commander Charlotte Manley RN and Major Timothy Allan were in attendance.

April 18: The Princess Royal, President, Animal Health Trust, this morning attended the Animal Welfare Symposium at the Royal Society, Carlton House Terrace, London SW1.

Her Royal Highness this afternoon visited Musto Limited at Linden Road, Benfleet, and Christy Way, Laindon, and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Essex (the Lord Braybrooke).

The Princess Royal, Patron, Spinal Injuries Association, this evening attended the Grand National Anniversary Ball at the Dorchester Hotel, London W1.

CLARENCE HOUSE
April 18: Lieutenant-Colonel Clive Hodges today had the honour of being received by Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother, Colonel-in-Chief, The King's Regiment, upon relinquishing his appointment as Commanding Officer of the 1st Battalion.

Lieutenant-Colonel Christopher Owen also had the honour of being received by Her Majesty upon assuming his appointment as Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion The King's Regiment.

KENSINGTON PALACE
April 18: The Duke of Gloucester opened the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Seminar and subsequently opened the "Cities of the Future" Exhibition at the Ho Am Theatre, Seoul. In the afternoon His Royal Highness was received by the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Korea (Mr Yoo Chon Ha) and afterwards visited the new Marks and Spencer store, Seoul.

The Duchess of Gloucester today visited Norfolk and was received on arrival by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Norfolk (Sir Timothy Colman KG). Her Royal Highness opened the new Adult In-Patient Psychiatric Facilities at Hellesdon Hospital, Norwich, and later visited Norwich Cathedral and subsequently met members of the St Matthew Society. Afterwards The Duchess of Gloucester visited the offices of Norwich and District Victim Support, 1a Silver Road, Norwich, Norfolk.

YORK HOUSE
April 18: The Duke of Kent, Vice-Chairman, the British Overseas Trade Board, this evening left London Heathrow airport for Cape Town, South Africa, for the British Means Business week.

Mr Nicolas Adamson was in attendance.

THATCHED HOUSE LODGE
April 18: Princess Alexandra, accompanied by the Rt Hon Sir Angus Ogilvy, this afternoon opened Crieff Hospital, Perthshire, and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Perth and Kinross (Sir David Montgomery, Bt).

Her Royal Highness, President, and the Rt Hon Sir Angus Ogilvy later visited the Imperial Cancer Research Fund Shop at 29 High Street, Crieff.

Royal engagements

TODAY: The Duke of York, as Patron, Fight for Sight, will open the OPTRAFAIR 97 Trade Exhibition at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham, at 11.15.

Prince Edward, as President, will attend a reception followed by the premiere of "Warchild" given by the National Youth Music Theatre in Peterborough Cathedral, Cambridgeshire, at 6.45.

TOMORROW: The Queen will take the Salute at the St George's Day Parade of Queen's Scouts in the Quadrangle of Windsor Castle at 2.00.

Service dinner

Institute of Naval Medicine
The Mayor of Gosport attended a ladies guest night dinner held last night at the Institute of Naval Medicine, Gosport, in honour of Surgeon Rear-Admiral M.P.W.H. Paine, Medical Director General (Navy) and Mrs Paine. Lieutenant Commander M. White presided. Surgeon Commodore G.H.G. McMillan, Dean of Naval Medicine, was among the guests.

Mary Douglas Leakey

A Memorial Service will be held for Mary Leakey in Jesus College Chapel on Saturday, May 3, at 2.30pm.

Eltham College

The summer term began at Eltham College on April 14. There will be a 'European Week' commencing on April 21, during which the College will host 16 representatives from all EU Countries. Mozart's *Mass in C minor* will be performed in the Blackheath Concert Halls on May 1, at 7.30pm. The Old Elthamian Summer Reunion is scheduled for July 5 with a Thanksgiving Service for the life of John Somerville-Meikle in Chapel at 11am. Senior School Speech Day will be on July 9, with Professor Donald Trelford guest of honour, and Junior School Prize Giving on July 8.

Dinners

Constructors' Company
The Lord Mayor, accompanied by the Sheriffs, was the principal guest and speaker at the annual ladies' dinner of the Constructors' Company held last night at Drapers' Hall. Mr Philip Everett, Master, presided and presented a cheque to the Lord Mayor in support of the Cancer Research Campaign. Mr Robert Wharton, Senior Warden, Mr J.D. Moore, Headmaster of St Dunstan's College, Catford, and Mr A.W.J. Appleton also spoke. The Masters of the Carpenters', Masons', Plumbers', Glass Sellers', Painter-Stainers', and Chartered Architects' Companies and the Master of the Society of Apothecaries of London, and their ladies were among the guests.

Shipwrights' Company
Mr James Freeland, Prime Warden of the Shipwrights' Company, presided at the annual installation dinner held last night at Merchant Taylors' Hall. Lord Wakeham was the guest speaker. The First Upper Warden of the Merchant Taylors' Company, the Master of the Clockmakers' Company and Mr Justice Clarke and their ladies were among the guests.

Honourable Artillery Company
Mr Thomas Menino, Mayor of the City of Boston, Massachusetts, accompanied by Officers of the City, were entertained at a dinner of the Honourable Artillery Company held last night at Armoury House to mark the visit of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Boston, commemorating their first official visit to England 100 years ago. Major Fergus Falk, Vice-President of the HAC, presided. Among others present were:
the Chief Commoner of the City of London, the Remembrancer, Mr John Bird, Colonel Robert H Curran (Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company, Boston) and serving and elected Officers of the HAC and the Boston Association.

Old Ipswichian Club
Mr J.G. Galbraith, Headmaster of Ipswich School, was the principal guest at the London dinner of the Old Ipswichian Club held last night at the East India, Devonshire, Sports and Public Schools Club. Mr W.A.D. Whitfield, president, was in the chair. Mr H.M. Clarke also spoke.

Memorial service

Air Marshal Sir Denis Crowley-Milling
The Duke of Edinburgh, Grand Master of the Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators, was represented by Mr R.W. Bridge, Master, and the Duke and Duchess of Kent by Lieutenant-Commander Sir Richard Buckley at a service of thanksgiving for the life of Air Marshal Sir Denis Crowley-Milling held yesterday at St Clement Danes, Strand.

The Rev Peter Bishop officiated, assisted by the Ven P.R. Turner, Chaplain-in-Chief, RAF, who led the prayers. Marshal of the RAF Sir Michael Beetham, Mr Michael Crowley-Milling, brother, and Sir Stephen Brown read the lessons.

Air Commodore John Miller read *Oh Once Again* by Pilot Officer John Gillespie Magee, Mr Paul Bowen read *For Johnny* by John Pudney, and Mrs Jeffrey Quill read *The Perfect Gentle Knight* by Chaucer.

The Right Rev F.W. Cocks pronounced the blessing. The Ven B.H. Lucas, Canon J.H. Wilson and the Rev R.N. Kenward were robed and in the Sanctuary.

During the service Sir Denis's medals were borne to the altar by James Narayan, a Foundationer from the Duke of Kent School, escorted by Air Chief Marshal Sir Denis Smallwood, President of the Friends of St Clement Danes, and Mr G.H. Chesterton.

Colonel Prince Faisal Al Hussein of Jordan and Field Marshal Lord Bramall, KG, Lord-Lieutenant of Greater London, attended. Among others present were:
Lady Crowley-Milling (widow), Mr and Mrs Patrick Robinson and Mr and Mrs Paul Masterman (sons-in-law and daughters), Natasha Robinson, Katrina Robinson and James Masterman (grandchildren), Mrs Michael Crowley-Milling (sister-in-law).

Viscount Trenchard, Lord Catto, Lord Newall, Lord Barber, Air Commodore the Hon Sir Peter Vanneck, Air Commodore the Hon Tim and Mrs Elworthy, Marshal of the RAF Lord and Lady Craig of Radley, Marshal of the RAF Sir Denis and Lady Spotswood, Marshal of the RAF Sir Keith Williamson (also representing Royal West Norfolk Golf club) and Lady Williamson.

Admiral Sir David Williams and Commandant Anthea Larken (presidents, the "Not Forgotten" Association) with Miss C J Seeley (vice-president), Major-General Sir Christopher Airy (chairman), Lieutenant-Colonel T J Tedder (director), Mrs M J Giles (assistant director), Captain D W Napper, RN, Mr D Cowley, Mr G Errington and other members.

Admiral Sir John and Lady Treacher, General Sir Frank Kitson, Air Chief Marshal Sir Richard Johns (Chief of the Air Staff) and Lady Johns, Air Chief Marshal Sir John Allison (Air Member for Logistics), Air Chief Marshal Sir Roger and Lady Palin, Air Chief Marshal Sir David Evans (representing the Order of the Bath) and Lady Evans, Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael Armitage, Air Chief Marshal Sir Brian Burnett.

Air Chief Marshal Sir Christopher Foxley-Norris (Battle of Britain Pilots Fighter Association), Air Chief Marshal Sir John Gingell, Air Chief Marshal Sir Robert Freer, Air Chief Marshal Sir Patrick Hine (British Aerospace), Air Chief Marshal Sir Lewis Hodges, Air Chief Marshal Sir Thomas Kennedy, Air Chief Marshal Sir David Parry-Evans, Air Chief Marshal Sir Thomas Prickett, Air Chief Marshal Sir Neil Wheeler, Air Chief Marshal Sir Nigel and Lady Maynard.

Vice-Admiral Sir Louis Le Bailly, Lieutenant-General Sir James Wilson, Air Marshal Sir John Curtiss, Air Marshal Sir Patrick Dunn, Air Marshal Sir Geoffrey Ford, Air Marshal Sir Donald Hall, Air Marshal Sir Timothy Garden (Chatham House), Air Marshal Sir Roger Austin-Smith, Air Marshal Sir Kenneth Hayr, Air Marshal Sir Charles Pringle, Air Marshal Sir Charles Soutar, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Major-General Sir Desmond Rice, Air Vice-Marshal Sir Alan Boxer.

Sir John Killick, Lady Heath, Lady Heward, Sir Frank Cooper, Sir Adrian Swire (chairman, RAF Benevolent Fund) with other members of the fund: Lady Bramall, Lady Beetham, Sir Michael Cobham, Lady Humphrey, Lady Brown, Lady Lapsley, Lady Bader, Lady Barnett, Sir Christopher Benson, Sir Carron Greig, Sir Victor LeFanu, Lady McIndoe, Lady Nicolson, Dame Felicity Peake, Sir Humphrey Prideaux, Lady Stack, Lady Stewart, Sir Ross Stainton, Sir Nicholas Scott, Lady (John) Thomson, Lady (Gus) Walker, Mr Michael and Lady Angela Oswald.

Air Vice-Marshal T I Jenner (Assistant Chief of the Air Staff) and Mrs Jenner, Air Vice-Marshal P C Norriss (Controller Aircraft) and Mrs Norriss, Air Marshal A Maisner (Polish Air Forces Association), Air Vice-Marshal H Bird Wilson, Air Vice-Marshal B Brownlow, Air Vice-Marshal L W G Gill, Air Vice-Marshal N Howlett (RAFA), Air Vice-Marshal F C Hurrell, Air Vice-Marshal J W Price, Air Vice-Marshal and Mrs F C Hurrell, Air Vice-Marshal R A Riseley-Prichard, Air Vice-Marshal C R Spink (11/18 Group), Air Commandant B M Ducat-Amos.

Brigadier P M Stewart-Richardson, Air Commodore P M Brothers, Air Commodore C C M Baker, Air Commodore F O Barrett, Air Commodore D Simmonds, Air Commodore R J Spiers, Air Commodore P Thorne, Air Commodore E W Wooten, Air Commodore F B Yetman, Wing Commander J Bullen (38 Group), Wing Commander B P Barthropp.

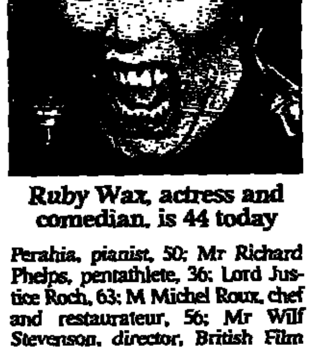
Mr H M Milling, Mr H Milling, Miss A Milling, Mr C D Milling, Mrs A Millington, Mr N Douglas, Mr John Brunel Cohen, Mrs Diana Barnato-Walker, Mr William Grandy, Dr D Calwell, Mrs G H Chesterton, Mrs John Miller, Mr R Baxter, Mrs H L Benjamin, Mr R Elliott, Mr D Glasner, Mrs S Goodhew, Captain C E Elton, Captain G Fowkes, Professor E R Hardy Mivamy, Dr T Jelliffe, Mrs H Long, Mr P Nicholls, Mr G I D Norton, Mr P Oelmann, Mr M R Reid, Mr L A Sanson, Mr H Schulman, Mr D Shepherd, Mr D J Simmonds, Mr J South, Mrs A Southern, Mrs P Stevens, Mrs E Ticehurst, Mr B Trubshaw, Mrs P R Turner, Mr Ian Whittle, Mrs A van den Bergh, Mr L Williams.

Mr J J Allaway, Mr G Holloway and Mr W Foxley (Guinea Pig Club), Mr T D Cochrane (Guinea Pig Association), Mr J J Toper (editor, *Guinea Pig Club Magazine*), Mr D Bicker and Mr R Delderfield (Douglas Bader Foundation), Captain A J Hanley-Brown, Dr I Verner and Mr C A Owens (GAPAN), Mr T Bebb (Lawrence Keen), Squadron Leader C B Savoury and Mrs J Billings (Muckleborough Collection), Mr J Binnie (Royal International Air Tattoo), Dr M Fopp (RAF Museum), Group Captain D Green (Spitfire Society), Group Captain J D Heron (Rolls-Royce), Group Captain R T W Mighall (RAuxAF).

Mr Stuart Holmes (Westminster Abbey), Mr M J P Knott (Malvern College), Mr M Marshall (Marshall of Cambridge), Mrs B McNair (War Widows Association), Mr A White (Tangmere Museum), Mr Seb Cox (Air Historical Branch) and representatives of RAF College, Cranwell, King Edward VII Hospital for Officers, 6 Squadron, 242 Squadron, 615 Squadron, 209 Squadron, the RAF Escaping Society, Queen Alexandra's Hospital, Worthing, the 600 City of London Squadron, the Polish Air Forces Benevolent Fund, Phyllis Court Club and many other friends and colleagues.

Weekend birthdays

TODAY: The Earl of Annandale and Hartfell, 56; Mr William Baillie, President, Royal Scottish Academy, 74; the Most Rev Luigi Barbarito, Apostolic Nuncio, 75; Miss Sue Barker, tennis player and sports commentator, 41; Mr Dickie Bird, cricket umpire, 64; Mr Antonio Carluccio, restaurateur, 60; Mr Algy Cluff, chairman and chief executive, Cluff Mining, 57; Mr Adrian Coles, director-general, Building Societies Association, 43; Mr Tim Curry, actor, 51; Mr Glyn England, director, The Wind Fund, 76; Mr Trevor Francis, footballer, 43; Lord Justice Henry, 66; Dr Sir John Horlock, FRS, former Vice-Chancellor, Open University, 69; Mr G.B. Inglis, former senior partner, Slaughter and May, 64; Mrs Margo MacDonald, former MP, 54; Mr Dudley Moore, actor and composer, 62; Mr Garfield Morgan, actor, 66; Mr Murray Perahia, pianist, 50; Mr Richard Phelps, pentathlete, 36; Lord Justice Roch, 63; M Michel Roux, chef and restaurateur, 56; Mr Wilf Stevenson, director, British Film Institute, 50; Miss Bridget Towle Chief Guide, The Guide Association, 55; the Hon Michael Trend, 45; Mr Philip Wroughton, Lord-Lieutenant of Berkshire, 64.



Ruby Wax, actress and comedian, is 44 today

TOMORROW:
Viscount Allenby, 66; Mr Alan Beith, 54; Professor D.W. Bowett, QC, FBA, former President, Queens' College, Cambridge, 70; Mr Ray Brooks, actor, 58; Sir Geoffrey Chipperfield, civil servant, 64; the Right Rev F.C. Darwent, former Bishop of Aberdeen and Orkney, 70; Mr Richard de Lange, chairman and managing director, Philips Electronics UK, 52; Major-General Sir Charles Dunphie, 95; the Earl of Erroll, 49; Mr Sebastian Faulks, author, 44; Professor Francis Fish, former Dean, School of Pharmacy, London University, 73; Mr Graeme Fowler, cricketer, 40; Sir Arnold France, former chairman, Board of Inland Revenue, 86; Mr John Eliot Gardiner, conductor, 54; Mr Mauricio Gugelmin, racing driver, 34; Mr Jerry Hayes, 44; Mr Giles Henderson, senior partner, Slaughter and May, 55; Mr Andrew Jaspan, former Editor, *The Observer*, 45; Sir Antony Jay, scriptwriter and producer, 67; Sir Eddie Kulukundis, theatrical producer, 65; Miss Jessica Lange, actress, 48; Mr Cy Laurie, jazz clarinettist, 71; Mr Nicholas Lyndhurst, actor, 36; Mr Leslie Phillips, actor, 73; Sir John Quicke, agriculturist, 75; Mr R.D.W. Rhodes, Headmaster, Rossall School, Lancashire, 55; Mr Hugh Roberts, Director of the Royal Collection, 49; Mr Christopher Robinson, organist, 61; Mr R.J. Smith, former chairman, Trimoco, 58; Miss Jean Southworth, QC, 71; Mr Luther Vandross, singer, 46; Air Marshal Sir Richard Wakeford, 75; Mr Henry Wrong, former director, Barbican Centre, 67.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr R.A.St.J. Ballinger
and Miss A. Willis
The engagement is announced between Alexander, only son of Major and Mrs Richard Ballinger, of Hartlip, Kent, and Abigail, younger daughter of Major General and Mrs John Willis, of Graffham, Petworth, West Sussex.

Mr A.A. Bush
and Miss L.M. Stephens
The engagement is announced between Andrew, son of Mr and Mrs John Bush, of St Margaret's Bay, Kent, and Lee, daughter of Brigadier and Mrs Kim Stephens, of Catterick Garrison, North Yorkshire.

Mr D.A. Carden
and Miss S.M. Marcon
The engagement is announced between David, son of Mr and Mrs Richard Carden, of Upper Hartfield, East Sussex, and Sabine, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs Robert Marcon, of Pau, France.

Mr M.T.G. Cobb
and Miss C.L. Chegwin
The engagement is announced between Matthew, only son of the Revd and Mrs Peter Cobb, of Tal-y-coed, Monmouthshire, and Celia, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Robert Chegwin, of Cyncoed, Cardiff.

Brigadier H.F. Everard
and Mrs M.E. Higham
The engagement is announced between Brigadier Harry Everard and Mrs Merrill Eglin Higham, née Colebrook, both of Bayswater.

Mr G.E. Doodes
and Miss C.E. Stacey
The engagement is announced between Edward, only son of Mr and Mrs Peter Doodes, of Battle, East Sussex, and Charlotte, only daughter of Mr and Mrs David Stacey, of Ufford, Lincolnshire.

Mr I.H. Grundy
and Miss A. Rankin
The engagement is announced between Ian, son of Mr and Mrs Mark Grundy, of Twickenham, Middlesex, and Annabel, daughter of Mr and Mrs Robert Rankin, of London, SW15.

Mr J.S. Pudney
and Miss S.G.M. Hartley
The engagement is announced between Jonathon, elder son of Mr Jeremy Pudney, of Islington, London, and Mrs Valerie Marshall, of Almondbury, West Yorkshire, and Sophie, daughter of Mr and Mrs Jim Hartley, of Itchenor, West Sussex.

Mr J.M. Scheib
and Miss R.J. Baggaley
The engagement is announced between Jayson, elder son of Mr and Mrs Carl Scheib, of Cobham, Surrey, and Rachel, younger daughter of Dr and Mrs Keith Baggaley, of Redhill, Surrey.

Mr A.M.M. Stobie
and Miss T.M. Crawley
The engagement is announced between Alistair, son of Colonel and Mrs Douglas Stobie, of Chitterne, Wiltshire, and Tessa, daughter of Mr and Mrs Thomas Crawley, of Chiswick, London.

Anniversaries

TODAY: BIRTHS: Herbert Wilcox, film producer, Cork, 1890; Richard Hughes, novelist, Weybridge, Surrey, 1900.

DEATHS: Paolo Veronese, painter, Verona, 1588; Thomas Sackville, 1st Earl of Dorset, poet and statesman, London, 1608; George Gordon Byron, 6th Baron Byron, poet, Missolonghi, Greece, 1824; Benjamin Disraeli, 1st Earl of Beaconsfield, Prime Minister 1868 and 1874-80, London, 1881; Charles Darwin, naturalist, Down, Kent, 1882; Pierre Curie, physicist, Nobel laureate 1903, Paris, 1906; Sir Squire Bancroft, actor-manager, London, 1926; Daphne du Maurier, novelist, Cornwall, 1989.

TOMORROW: BIRTHS: Napoleon III, French Emperor 1852-70, Paris, 1808; Adolf Hitler, German dictator, Branau am Inn, Austria, 1889; Harold Lloyd, film comedian, Nebraska, 1893.

DEATHS: Giovanni Antonio Canaletto, painter, Venice, 1768; Pontiac, chief of the Ottawa Indians, Cahokia, Illinois, 1769; Bram Stoker, writer, author of *Dracula*, London, 1912.

Service luncheon

Trucial Oman Scouts
The annual luncheon for Officers of the Trucial Oman Levies, Trucial Oman Scouts, and the Union Defence Force was held yesterday at the Army and Navy Club.

Church services tomorrow

Third Sunday after Easter

ST ANDREWS CATHEDRAL, ABERDEEN: 8 HC; 10.15 S Euch, Stanford in C, The Lord is my shepherd (Berkeley), The Provost; 6.30 ES, Treble Service (Weelkes), Remember not O Lord (Purcell).

ARMAGH CATHEDRAL: 10 HC; 11 S Euch, Fintan O'Carroll in D, Awake thy wintry earth (Bach), The Dean; 3.15 Choral E, Walmisley in D minor, Praise God in his holy place (Mawby).

BELFAST CATHEDRAL: 10 HC; 11 Choral C, Darke in F, Ave verum (Byrd); 3.30 Bicentenary of the Royal Victoria Hospital, Benedicite (Jackson in G).

BIRMINGHAM CATHEDRAL: 9 MP; 9.15 HC; 11 Choral Euch, Mass for Four Voices (Byrd), Christ is now risen again (Eccard), Rev V Cory; 4 Choral E, Second Service (Gibbons), I am the resurrection (Schuetz).

BRECON CATHEDRAL: 8 Holy Euch; 11 M, Te Deum (Stanford in C), Now the green blade riseth (Hesford); 3.30 E, Walmisley in D minor, If we believe that Jesus died and rose again (Goss).

CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.30 M, Rev P Mackenzie; 11 S Euch, Missa Sancti Josephi (Caldara), Lord for thy tender mercy's sake (Hilton), Rt Rev G James; 3.15 E, Stanford in G, Insanae et vanae curae (Haydn); 5 Scouts' Service for St George's Tide, Rev P Gausden.

CARLISLE CATHEDRAL: 7.45 M; 8 HC; 10.30 S Euch, Mass for four voices (Byrd), Canon C Hill; 3 E, Ireland in F, Sing ye to the Lord (Bairstow).

CHELMSFORD CATHEDRAL: 7.30 MP; 8 HC, The Acting Provost; 9.30 Euch, Canon B Thompson; 11.15 S Euch, Darke in E, Holy is the true light (Harris), Canon R Greenwood; 3.20 St George's Day; 6 Thanksgiving Service for the Mayoral Year, Dyson in F, Sing we merrily (Campbell), The Acting Provost.

CHESTER CATHEDRAL: 7.45 L; 8 HC; 10 Choral Euch, Darke in F, Rev T Barker; 11.30 Choral M, Te Deum in C (Haydn), When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion (Batten), Canon T Dennis; 3.30 Choral E, Collegium Regale (Howells); 6.30 ES, Canon T Dennis.

CHICHESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 M, Stanford in B flat, This joyful Eastertide (Wood), The Treasurer; 11 S Euch, Missa Brevis in D, Ubi caritas (Duruflé), Rev A Piper; 2 St George's Tide Service; 3.30 E, Second Service (Byrd), If we believe that Jesus died (Goss).

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL, Oxford: 8 HC; 10 M & Sermon, Collegium Regale (Howells), Canon O'Donovan; 11.15 S Euch, Simile est regnum coelorum (Guerrero), Christ our Paschal Lamb (Sheppard); 6 E, Lyndon Hilling in F, O Lord the maker of al thing (Joubert).

COVENTRY CATHEDRAL: 7.40 MP; 8 Communion; 10.30 Euch, Coventry Mass (Walker), God liveth still (Bach), Rise heart (Vaughan Williams), Canon C Burch; 3 St George's Day; 5 E, God liveth still (Bach), Wood in E flat, Rise heart (Vaughan Williams).

DURHAM CATHEDRAL: 8 HC, Canon S Pedley; 10 M, Ireland in F, When the Lord turned again, The Precentor; 11.15 HC, Missa brevis (Palestrina), Haec dies (Palestrina), Canon S Pedley; 3.30 E, Murrill in E, Ye choirs of new Jerusalem.

ELY CATHEDRAL: 8.15 HC, Rev J Inge; 10.30 S Euch, Mass in C sharp minor (Vierne), The Dean; 3.45 E, Collegium Magdalenae (Leighton), Rise heart (Vaughan Williams).

EXETER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.45 S Euch, Mass of St Thomas (Thorne), Panis angelicus (Saint-Saens), Canon K Parry; 11.15 M, Te Deum & Jubilate (Stanford in B flat), Sing Praise to God (Jackson), Rev G Daxter; 3 E, Lacrimosa dies illa (Requiem Mass); 6.30 E, Most glorious Lord of life (Harris), The Dean.

GLOUCESTER CATHEDRAL: 8, 12.15 HC; 10.15 Euch, Harwood in A flat, Canon C Morgan; 3 E, Harwood in A flat, Jerusalem on High (Ouseley).

HEREFORD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 Euch & Confirmation, Stanford in G, Let all mortal flesh (Bairstow), The Bishop; 11.30 M, Ireland in F, If we believe that Jesus died (Goss); 3.30 E, Wood in D, Gloria in excelsis (Weelkes), The Succentor.

LEICESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 M; 10.30 Euch, Stanford in C, Rejoice in the Lord alway (Redford), Canon A Thiselton; 2.30 St George's Day; 4 Choral E, Bairstow in D, Zadok the Priest (Handel), The Precentor.

LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10.30 S Euch, Stanford in B flat, My beloved spake (Hadley), Now the green blade riseth (Paul James), The Dean; 3.30 E, Responses (Smith), Stanford in B flat, My beloved spake (Purcell).

LINCOLN CATHEDRAL: 7.45 L; 8, 12.30 HC; 9.30 S Euch, Messe Solennelle (Vierne), Rev M Taylor; 11.15 M, Collegium Regale (Howells), Deep Peace (Rutter); 2 St George's Day; 3.45 E, Fifth Service (Tomkins), My beloved spake (Tomkins), Canon B Wisken.

LLANDAFF CATHEDRAL: 7.30 M & Litany; 8 Holy Euch, Rev R Ford; 9 Parish Euch, Rev R Ford; 11 S Euch, Mass for four voices (Byrd), Ave verum corpus (Byrd), The Canon; 12.15 Holy Euch; 3.30 Choral E, Murrill in E, Like as the hart desireth the waterbrooks (Howells).

MANCHESTER CATHEDRAL: 8.45 M; 9 Euch; 10.30 S Euch, Os justi (Bruckner), Cortege et Litanie (Dupré), Canon P Hullah; 3 Boys Brigade; 6.30 E, The day dawns on with golden light (Bairstow), Canon J Atherton.

NEWPORT CATHEDRAL: 10.30 S Euch, Missa O quam gloriosum (Victoria), Regina coeli laetare (Soriano); 6.30 Choral E & Admission of Choristers, St Woolos Service (Moore), Christ the Lord is risen again (Rutter).

NORWICH CATHEDRAL: 7.30 MP; 8 HC; 9.15 HC; 10.30 S Euch, Stanford in C & F, Dum transisset (Taverner), Canon R Hanmer; 3.30 St George's Day; 6.30 EP with hymns, The Archdeacon of Norwich.

PETERBOROUGH CATHEDRAL: 8.15 HC; 9.30 M, Te Deum in G (Sumsion), Jubilate (Walton); 10.30 Euch, Stanford in B flat, The Treasurer; 3.30 E, Noble in B minor, In exitu Israel (Wesley).

PORTSMOUTH CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.30 Parish Communion, Mass of St Thomas, Ave verum corpus (Mozart), Canon J Hedges; 11 S Euch, Locus iste (Bruckner), Missa Sancti Nicolai (Haydn), Let all mortal flesh (Bairstow), Canon J Hedges; 4 Burma Star Association; 6.30 E, Wood in F, Insanae et vanae curae (Haydn), Canon D Isaac.

RIPON CATHEDRAL: 8 Euch, Canon M Glanville-Smith; 9.30 Parish Euch, The London Cantate Mass (Vann), If ye love me (Vann), Canon K Punshon; 11.30 M, Te Deum (Statham in D minor), Jubilate (Ireland in F), My beloved spake (Hadley); 12.30 Euch, Rev H Pickles; 3.30 E, Magnificat & Nunc Dimittis (Stanford in G), Kind of Glory (Harris), Canon M Barton.

ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.45 M, Jubilate (Walton), Up up My heart with gladness (Bach); 10.30 S Euch, Jackson in G, Let all mortal flesh (Bairstow), Canon E Turner; 3.15 E, Collegium Regale (Wood), Christ rising again (Weelkes).

SALISBURY CATHEDRAL: 8 HC, Very Rev D Watson; 10 Euch, Mozart in C, Ave verum corpus (Mozart), Canon O Durston; 11.30 Healing with laying on of hands; 3.30 E, Jackson in G, There is an old belief (Parry); 7.45 St George's Festival, Songs of praise; 9 St George's Festival, Fireworks in the Close.

SHEFFIELD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 MP; 10.30 S Euch, Bishop H Montefiore; 3 St George's Day Parade; 6.30 Festal E & Sermon, Canon T Page.

SOUTHWELL MINSTER: 7.45 Litany; 8 HC; 9.30 Parish Communion, Rt Rev R Milner; 11 M, Ireland in F, Haec dies (Byrd), The Chancellor; 3.15 Scout Service; 5.45 E, Second Service (Gibbons), Dum transisset Sabbatum (Taverner).

TRURO CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9 M; 10 S Euch, Now the green blade riseth (Trad.), Ave verum corpus (Mozart), The Chancellor; 3.30 Palliative Care Service; 6 E, Noble in B minor, Christ the Lord is risen again (Rutter), The Treasurer.

WAKEFIELD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC, Canon G Nairn-Briggs; 9.15 Parish Communion, Let all the world (Lang), Canon I Knox; 11 Solemn Euch, Vaughan Williams in G minor, Thou art the King of glory (Purcell), The Provost; 6.30 E, Stanford in A, Alleluia Christ is risen (Mathias).

WELLS CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.45 S Euch, Missa brevis (Palestrina), Very Rev R Lewis; 11.30 M, Ireland in F, O sing joyfully (Batten); 3 E, Murrill in E, I was glad (Parry), Rev M Walker.

WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10.30 M, Te Deum in G (Vaughan Williams), Exultate Deo (Palestrina), The Archdeacon of Basingstoke; 11.30 Euch, Missa brevis (Berkeley), O salutaris hostia (Rossini); 3.30 E, Magdalen Service (Leighton), This have I done for my true love (Holst), Rev T Daykin.

YORK MINSTER: 8, 8.45 HC; 10 S Euch, Stanford in C, Tantum ergo (Jackson), Rt Rev D Sheppard; 11.30 M, Te Deum (Holst), Jubilate in G (Jackson); 2 Scouts' St George's Day; 4 E, Ireland in F, Blessed be the God and Father (Wesley), Rev N Jones.

ST ASAPH CATHEDRAL, Clwyd: 8 HC; 11 Choral Euch, Jackson in G, Ave Maria (Bruckner), Canon D Roberts; 3.30 Choral E, Cantique de Jean Racine (Faure).

ST DAVIDS CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.30 Cymun Bendigaid, Y Deon; 9.30 Parish Euch, The Minor Canon; 11.15 Choral M, Noble in B minor, Almighty and everlasting God (Gibbons), The Dean; 6 Choral E, Brewer in D, The Spirit of the Lord (Elgar).

ST EDMUNDSBURY CATHEDRAL: 8 HC, The Provost; 10 S Euch, Canon M Mingins, Rev V Herrick, Mathias (Mozart in G), Tantum ergo (Duruflé), Expend O Lord (Tallis); 11.30 Choral M, Collegium Regale (Howells), Holy holy holy (Harris); 3.30 Choral E, He is risen (Pike), Rubbra in A flat, Greater love (Ireland).

ST GEORGE'S CATHEDRAL, Southwark: 8, 10, 6 LM; 11.30 Solemn Mass, Mozart in G, Regnavit Dominus (Shebbeare), Fr J Boyle; 4 International Mass.

ST GILES' CATHEDRAL, Edinburgh: 8 Morning HC, Rev J Williams; 10 Morning HC, Rev Dr Finlay, Vidi speciosam (Victoria); 11.30 Morning, Rev Dr Finlay, Haec Dies (Byrd); 6 St Giles at Six, Glasgow Philharmonic Choir; 8 Evening, Rev D Roberton.

ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL: 8 Euch; 10.30 Euch, Missa Brevis (Walton), Te Deum in E (Britten), Rev A Mackintosh; 3.30 Choral E, Noble in B minor, There is an old belief (Parry).

ST MACHAR'S CATHEDRAL, Old Aberdeen: 11 God be in my head (Rutter), Cry out with joy (Walker), Rev R Fraser; 6 Rev R Fraser.

ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL, London: 8 HC; 8.45 M; 11 S Euch, Missa Regina coeli (de Kerll), I got me flowers (Vaughan Williams), The Dean; 3.15 E, Naylor in D, I know that my redeemer liveth (Bach), Rev J Halliburton; 5 Recital.

RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL, Ennismore Gardens, London, SW7: 10.30 Divine Liturgy, Kievan and traditional polyphony.

ALL SAINTS, Margaret Street, W1: 8, 5.15 LM; 10.20 MP; 11 HM, Missa Brevis (Leighton), Rev I Davies; 6 E & B, Purcell in B flat, The Vicar.

ALL SOULS, Langham Place, W1: 11 Rev J Cook; 6.30 Communion Service, Rev A Rider.

THE ASSUMPTION, Warwick Street, W1: 11 Missa brevis (Gabrieli), This joyful Eastertide (Wood), Regina coeli laetare (Escobar).

CHELSEA OLD CHURCH, SW3: 8 HC; 10 Children; 11 M, Laudate Pueri (Mozart), Canon B Smith; 12.15 HC; 6 E, Mr D Boyce.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE CHURCH, Curzon St, W1: 11 Sunday School.

CROWN COURT CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, Covent Garden, WC2: 11.15, 6.30 Rev S Hood.

FARM STREET, W1: 8, 9.30, 12.30, 4.15, 6.15 LM; 11 HM.

HOLY TRINITY BROMPTON, Brompton Road, SW7: 9 ASB HC, Rev N Gumbel; 11 Morning, Rev N Gumbel; 5, 7.30 Informal, Rev S Millar.

THE ORATORY, Brompton Road, SW7: 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 Mass, Messe Solenelle (Vierne), Dic nobis maria (Bassano); 12.30, 4.30, 7 Mass; 3.30 V & B, Maria Magdalena (Dulot).

ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH: Iverna Gdns, W8: 11 Holy Mass, Archbishop Y Gizirian.

WESLEY'S CHAPEL, City Road, EC2: 9.45 HC; 11 Morning Service, Mr D Morley.

WESTMINSTER CENTRAL HALL (Methodist), SW1: 11 HC; 6.30 Evening Praise, Rev Dr P Graves.

ST ANNE AND ST AGNES (Lutheran), Gresham St, EC2: 11 Choral Euch, Rev Dr J Schneider; 7 Bach Vespers, Rev V Stock.

ST AUGUSTINE'S CHURCH, South Kensington: Missa Brevis (Berkeley), Greater love hath no man than this (Ireland).

ST BARTHOLOMEW THE GREAT, Smithfield, EC1: 9 HC; 11 Choral Euch, Missa Iste Confessor (Palestrina), The Rector; 6.30 E, Wood in F, Expectans expectavi (Wood), Regina caeli (Victoria), The Rector.

ST BRIDE'S, Fleet Street, EC4: 11 Choral M & Euch, Jubilate, Second Service (Gibbons), Coronation Gloria (Stanford), Let all mortal flesh keep silence (Self), Canon J Oates; 6.30 Choral E, Second Service (Byrd), If ye be risen again with Christ (Gibbons), Canon J Oates.

ST CLEMENT DANES: 11 Choral Euch, Darke in F, Judge me O God (Mendelssohn), Rev P Bishop.

ST COLUMBA'S CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, Pont Street, SW1: 11 Rev C MacLeod; 6.30 Rev W Cairns.

ST ETHELDREDA'S, Ely Place: 11 S Mass, Vidi Aquam (Victoria), Missa Euge Bone (Tye), Jubilate Deo (Gabrieli).

ST GEORGE'S, Hanover Square, W1: 8.30 HC; 11 S Euch, Stanford in A, The Rector.

ST JAMES'S, Garlickhythe, EC4: 10.30 S Euch (1662), Stella Cantores, John Paul (Rector).

ST JAMES'S, Piccadilly: 8.30 HC; 11 S Euch, Rev S Castle; 5.45 EP.

ST JOHN'S, Stratford E15: 11 Family Communion, Prelude & Fugue in D (Bach), Rev M Okello; 6.30 EP & Praise, Rev D Richards.

ST LUKE'S, Chelsea, SW3: 10.30 S Euch, Haec Dies (Byrd), Rev C Kevill-Davies; 12.15 HC; 6.30 E, Regina coeli laetare (Desprez), Rev C Kevill-Davies.

ST MARK'S, Regents Park Rd, NW1: 8 HC; 9.45 Family Communion; 11 S Euch, Missa Ellensis (Willis), Ye choirs of new Jerusalem (Stanford), Rev J Chater.

ST MARTIN-IN-THE-FIELDS, WC2: 8 HC; 9.45 Euch, Ven C Gregorowski; 11.30 Visitors, The Vicar; 2.45 Chinese, Rev P Chester; 5 Choral E; 6.30 Evening.

ST MARY ABBOTS CHURCH, Kensington W8: 8, 12.30 HC; 9.30 Parish Euch, The Vicar; 11.15 Choral M, Rev F Gelli; 6.30 E, Rev M Fuller.

ST MARY'S, Bourne Street, SW1: 9, 10, 7 LM; 11 HM, Missa Le bien que j'ai (Goudimel), Fr B Scott; 6 Solemn E & B.

ST MARY-THE-VIRGIN, Primrose Hill: 8 HC; 10.30 Parish Euch, Darke in e, Greater love hath no man (Ireland); 6 Taize.

ST MARYLEBONE, Marylebone Road, W1: 8 HC; 11 Choral Euch, Mass in B flat (Hummel), The Rector.

ST PAUL'S, Wilton Place, SW1: 8, 9 HC; 11 Solemn Euch, Missa Bell Amfitrit altera (Lassus), The eyes of all wait upon thee (Harris), Canon E James.

ST PETER'S, Eaton Square, SW1: 8.15 HC; 10 Family Euch; 11 S Euch, Missa Paschalis (Lassus), Cantate Domino (Hassler), Fr D Tillyer.

ST SIMON ZELOTES, Milner St, SW3: 8 HC; 11 HC, Thaxted Mass, Surge illuminare (Byrd), Preb M McGowan; 6.30 E.

CHAPEL ROYAL OF ST PETER AD VINCULA, HM Tower of London: 9.15 HC, Rev P Abram; 11 M & Sermon, Benedictus, Tallis (Plainsong), Christ rising again (Byrd), Rev P Abram.

CHAPEL ROYAL, St. James's Palace: 8.30 HC; 11.15 MP, Haec Dies (Byrd), Canon J Stanley.

GROSVENOR CHAPEL, South Audley Street, W1: 8.15 HC; 11 S Euch, Communion Service in F (Darke), Blessed be the God and Father (Wesley).

QUEEN'S CHAPEL OF THE SAVOY, WC2: 11 S Euch, Ireland in C, Rt Rev G Rowell.

THE TEMPLE CHURCH, Fleet Street: 8.30 HC; 11.15 MP, Te Deum Laudamus (Britten in E), Jubilate Deo (Britten in C), Surgens Jesus (Phillips), The Master.

GUARDS CHAPEL, Wellington Barracks, SW1: 11 M, Exultate justi (Viadana), Ye choirs of new Jerusalem (Stanford), Band of the Irish Guards, Rev P Bosher; 12 HC.

ROYAL NAVAL COLLEGE CHAPEL, Greenwich, SE10: 11 S Euch (BCP), Darke in F, Rejoice in the Lord alway (Redford), Rev C French.

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Through Christ you have come to trust in God who raised him up from the dead and gave him glory and so your faith and hope are fixed on God. 1 Peter 1 : 21

BIRTHS

BANNER - On 14th April 1997 to Mark and Jo, a daughter, India Emily, a sister for Harry.

BARLOW WAREHAM - On April 9th 1997 at Edith Cavell Hospital, Brussels to Evelyn and Giles, a son, James Mathew.

BOGGART - On April 15th 1997 at The John Radcliffe Hospital, to Sue (née Edwards) and Simon, a son, Edward Sholto, a brother for Freddie and Tom.

CHAUHAN - On 16th April at Guy's Hospital, to Helen (née Mansell) and Devinder, a son, Oliver.

HINDLE - On April 9th 1997, to Ingrid (née Wootton) and Nigel, a daughter, Poppy Charlotte.

HOCKEN - On Easter Sunday, March 30th, to Glen and Jenny (née Child), a beautiful baby daughter, Morwenna Elizabeth.

LIDDELL-GRAINGER - On 14th April to Malcolm and Helen, a son, Cameron Henry.

MATOVU - On 5th March 1997 to Karen Anne (née Matthews) and Daniel Mbusi Sajabi, a son, Oliver Thomas Sajabi.

MILLS - On 11th April to Catriona (née Murray) and Michael, a son, Ruaraidh Alexander.

MORGAN - On 15th April 1997 to Tanya and Keith, a son, Darius Charles, a brother for Rhys.

SKINNER - On April 17th, 1997, to Amanda and Edward, a son, Thomas McInnes, a brother for Henry.

BIRTHS

UGLOW - On 9th April 1997, at Boston, Lincolnshire to Catharine (née Clark) and Richard, a lovely son, Dominic William George. Deo Gratias.

ANNIVERSARIES

AUBREY - Bill 1 - Sara 1! Happy first anniversary darling, love Sara.

DEATHS

BLAND - Kevin Godfrey MB. ChB. FRCS (Edin) FRCOG. Eldest son of the late Florence and Leslie of Birmingham. Passed away suddenly on April 13th 1997. Will be sadly missed by brother and sister-in-law Michael and Colleen, twin nephews, John and Andrew, aunt and uncle Rene and Dennis, cousin Mary and Helen. Burial will take place in Johannesburg, South Africa on Monday April 21st 1997.

DAVIDSON - Viola Joan. Widow of the late Doctor Bardley Davidson, much loved mother and grandmother, died peacefully at home on 17th April aged 93 years. Cremation at Golders Green at 3.30pm Wednesday 23rd April. No flowers please, donations to St Alban's Clinic, London N6.

ELTON - Rose (née Montague). On April 16th at Crawley Hospital aged 90. Cremation at Surrey and Sussex Crematorium on Thursday April 24th at 12.15pm. Family flowers only. Donations to NSPCC. Enquiries; Francis Chappell & Sons. 01293 521407

DEATHS

FISHER - Megan. Wife of the late Harry Johnson Fisher and mother of Annie Speir and Sue Scotton. Died peacefully on Monday 14th April. Funeral Brewood 2.45 Tuesday 22nd April. Flowers welcome.

HARCOMBE - Faith Gertrude. On 17th April 1997 at The Minehead and District Nursing Home. Beloved wife of the late Rev. Gerald Harcombe and mother of Anne and David. The Funeral Service takes place on Friday 25th April at 2.30pm St. Decuman's Church, Watchet, Somerset. Flowers to H. Hawkes & Sons Funeral Directors 01643 706123 or donations to The Parkinson's Disease Society.

KINROSS - Rupert passed away peacefully at home on 16th April aged 88 years. Much loved, he will be much missed. Funeral and interment at St Nicholas Church at a date to be announced.

McDOWELL - née Percival Elizabeth DSC FRSE. Dearly loved wife of Richard McDowell. Passed away on April 16th at St Peter's Hospital, Chertsey. The Funeral Service will take place on Wednesday 23rd at Woking Crematorium at 3.30pm. Close family and friends only. No flowers. Donations to Shelter Fund if wished. Funeral arrangements by F. Harrison & Son, Edgham. 01784 432163.

McKENNA - Paul M.T., on 12th April, aged 43. Service at Chichester Crematorium on Tuesday April 22nd at 12 noon. No flowers please.

MILES - Doctor Robert Harvey Douglas died on 4th April 1997 aged 72. The funeral took place on 15th April 1997. Sadly missed by family and many friends.

MORSS - Rita née Chadwick. Peacefully on 17th April. Beloved mother of Peter, Jackii and Suzanne and loving Grandma. Sadly missed by all. Funeral to be held at North East Surrey Crematorium on Friday 25th April. All enquiries to Ashtons Funeral Services. Tel: 0181 946 1051.

ORR - Jean Fergus Henderson of Bath. Formerly of Primrose Hill, London after a long illness. Funeral 1pm 24th April at Haycombe Cemetery, Bath.

SECCHI - On 17th April, 1997, very peacefully, at the War Memorial Hospital, Milford-on-Sea, Hampshire, Jemima Frances Mary ("Jane", "Jimmie"), Secchi, née Stewart, in the 79th year of her age and the 51st. of her marriage. She was the dearly loved wife of Leopold Anthony ("Tony") Secchi of Lymington, mother of Jeremy and Jocelyn and Liam's Granny. Requiem Mass at Lymington R.C. Church on Monday 28th. April at 12.00 noon followed by interment locally. Flowers may be sent to F.W. House & Sons, F/D, Lymington, Hampshire.

WEBB - Michael, died peacefully on April 15th, 1997 at home in Javea, Spain. Loving husband and father who will be sadly missed. Donations, if desired, to World Vision, Freepost, MK17 30, Milton Keynes.

IN MEMORIAM — PRIVATE

RUSSELL - Raymond Wycliffe - died on April 20th 1977, lovingly remembered by Inge and Victoria.

IN MEMORIAM — PRIVATE

SMITH - Yvonne. With us daily in our memories, especially tomorrow but as always with our love. Stanley, Alan and family.

WILKINSON - Dr. R.S. Died April 20th 1996. In memory of my beloved husband Ronnie. Muriel.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

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SIR DAVID HILDYARD

Sir David ("Toby") Hildyard, KCMG, DFC, former British Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva, died on April 5 aged 80. He was born on May 4, 1916.

Toby Hildyard's career reads like a chronicle of world politics since the Second World War. It culminated in 1975, one year before his retirement, when as head of Britain's delegation to the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), he flew with Harold Wilson to Helsinki to sign the Final Act — one of the great treaty symbols of East-West détente.

Only seven years before, he had been acting head of the British delegation at the UN in New York (in the absence of the Ambassador, Lord Caradon) at the time of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.

But if the UN provided one of the main strands in his career, another was formed by Hispanic affairs. His first appointment as head of mission in 1970 had been as British Ambassador in Santiago. No sooner had he arrived than Salvador Allende came to power as the Chilean President — the world's first democratically elected Marxist leader. Hildyard successfully forged a close personal and working relationship witih Allende — with at least one unexpected benefit for Britain.

In 1971, Sir Geoffrey Jackson, the British envoy in Uruguay, was kidnapped by the Tupamaros guerrillas, who demanded a large ransom for his release. It was President Allende, who, through his contacts with left-wing groupings, opened a channel of communication with the terrorists for Hildyard. The latter subsequently held three secret meetings on behalf of the Government with Tupamaros leaders in Santiago, being driven blind-fold to meet them in the middle of the night. His task was complicated by Britain's persistent refusal to meet their demands. Nonetheless, Geoffrey Jackson was released after eight months.

Hildyard returned to this country in 1973, just before Allende's overthrow and death in a military coup. But Chile recognised his friendship 18 years later by appointing him a Grand Official in its Order of Merit — its highest civil honour.

Hildyard, extreme right, and Harold Wilson at the signing of the Final Act of the East-West détente treaty in Helsinki in 1975

David Henry Thoroton Hildyard was born in London, the son of a distinguished QC who later became a County Court judge in Nottingham after inheriting a 1,000-acre Nottinghamshire estate. Toby (as he was always known) went to Eton, where he played for the Oppidans in the Wall Game, and was one of the school's 22 leading cricketers. He also won a Timmis exhibition to Christ Church, Oxford, to read politics, philosophy, and economics. His tutors included Lord Longford, Sir Roy Harrod and A. J. Ayer.

Hildyard then travelled to Germany, where he helped a young German friend, Alexander Boeker, get away from the Third Reich before the outbreak of the Second World War. Boeker, who eventually reached the United States, was later to serve as the Federal German Republic's Ambassador to the UN.

Hildyard had learnt to fly with the Oxford University Air Squadron in the 1930s, so found himself in the RAF shortly after the war started. Posted to Coastal Command, he served in Gibraltar and North Africa before leaving for the Far East.

He spent much of his time with 202 Flying Boat Squadron in Ceylon, winning the DFC in 1943, after "an exceptionally long operational career". The citation referred to the "resourcefulness" shown by Flight Lieutenant Hildyard while on escort, anti-submarine, and maritime rescue sorties, and to the number of VIPs (including Lord Louis Mountbatten) whom he had ferried around the region.

But the mission which attracted most attention was his intervention at Nancowry in the Nicobar Islands in the Indian Ocean. In an operation which was described by the Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden in the Commons, Hildyard and his crew snatched a small party of RAF personnel from the path of the advancing Japanese, then destroyed their base — including two wooden camps, power stations, radio transmitters, stores, dams, and 100,000 gallons of petrol. The Japanese arrived two days later.

Hildyard ended the war as a wing commander in Ceylon, in charge of the largest flying boat school in the world.

He attended the postwar Nuremberg trials after being commissioned by Whitehall intelligence to contribute a short account of the war from a German perspective. Following a spell of ill-health, he entered the Foreign Office in 1948. A year after he paid his first visit to the UN General Assembly, acting as a secretary to the British legation.

Hildyard's early postings included Montevideo from 1950 and Madrid from 1953. He went to Mexico City as counsellor in 1960. Between 1965 and 1968 he was head of the Foreign Office's economic relations department — a period which included the devaluation of the pound by the Wilson Government. Then in 1968 he left for the UN as minister and deputy to Lord Caradon — a more than usually important post since Caradon was a political appointee and Hildyard was thus the senior diplomat in the legation.

His last post was as Permanent Representative (with the rank of ambassador) to the UN and other international organisations in Geneva. The other organisations then included not only CSCE but also the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (Gatt).

Toby Hildyard was a friendly, sociable man with a good mind, who was once described as the perfect diplomat. In retirement he worked briefly with Sir Roy Strong, helping to raise funds for the Victoria and Albert Museum. He also became a director of the Lombard Odier bank, but retired from these and other interests in his early seventies.

His wife Millicent, whom he married in 1947, was the widow of an old friend Wing Commander Richard Longmore. They met when he called on her after her husband had been killed in action in the war. She, their son and daughter, and a stepson and step-daughter from her first marriage, survive him.

JOANNA LEWIS

Joanna Lewis in the 1930s

Joanna Lewis, physiotherapist, died on April 2 aged 86. She was born on November 25, 1910.

IN THE prime of her career Joanna Lewis was an ardent campaigner for better postural awareness in Britain, which she had discovered was badly neglected by the medical profession and the fitness industry. Her book *Fashion is Your Body* (1974), co-authored with Molly Castle, explained the Scandinavian Mensendieck method of exercising, which had, in the 1950s, saved her from semi-paralysis brought on by a fall from a horse.

She was determined to spread the benefits of Mensendieck and went on to train as a teacher. In due course she founded the English School of Mensendieck.

Dr Bess Mensendieck had invented this new method of therapeutic exercising in the early years of this century when, as a young art student, she noticed how imperfect was the posture of many artists' models. Qualifying as a doctor, she developed a method of exercising individual and groups of muscles to improve posture and thus relieve neck tensions, backache, and fibrositis. She was famous in Hollywood, where stars such as Ingrid Bergman and Gloria Swanson followed her technique.

At the height of her career, Joanna Lewis taught Mensendieck classes and trained teachers in London. She also appeared in a regular slot during several series of Michael Aspel's BBC TV *Afternoon Programme*.

She was the eldest child of Frank and Gladys Bune, and grand-daughter of John Bune, one-time chief of the parliamentary staff of *The Times*. She had been a talented pianist in her teens but was diverted from pursuing further musical study by marrying Stanley Hill at the age of 19. Until 1936, when she was widowed for the first time, she lived in Borneo as the wife of a district commissioner. There she galloped through the tropical forests, dodging monkeys which threw coconuts at her, and on one famous occasion nearly falling off her horse onto the top of a cobra.

In 1939, on the eve of war, she married, secondly, a naval commander. They were apart for virtually the duration of hostilities. But in 1952 she returned to the Far East as the wife of the Captain of the Dockyard in Hong Kong.

Always interested in health (she was a founder member of the Soil Association), she had yet to find her true vocation. But if health was one of her watchwords, hospitality was another. In Hong Kong, as in Borneo, she was able to give full rein to her talents on land and sea — a barge, just fast enough for water skiing came with the Captain of the Dockyard's job. "Thank you for being so kind to me on top of a mountain and under the sea," wrote one grateful guest after a memorable boat trip.

Joanna Lewis had suffered cracked vertebrae from a riding fall as a young woman. In middle age, the injury gave her trouble, and a London hospital warned her she might end up in a wheelchair. On a visit to Norway, she heard about the Mensendieck system and, back in London, consulted Harriet Nyemann, who had moved there from Denmark, where she had been trained by Bess Mensendieck.

The exercises eventually strengthened her lower back and she never became a cripple. Inspired by this experience, she decided to qualify and teach. Harriet Nyemann taught her in an all-female class of trainee teachers.

Joanna was undoubtedly the star pupil. "Watch Mrs Lewis," Harriet Nyemann constantly urged the class, until one of them, the daughter-in-law of the former Prime Minister, Andrew Bonar Law, cried out: "Mrs Lewis, Mrs Lewis, I am sick of Mrs Lewis." But the two became firm friends, and over the years, the American-born Merrie Coleraine and her husband Lord Coleraine gave encouraged her to use their flat in Sloane Street as one of several teaching centres.

From 1972 she was established in Weymouth Street and the English school of Mensendieck flourished. One journalist who came to the classes was Prudence Glynn, then fashion editor of *The Times*, who wrote the foreword to *Fashion is Your Body*.

In retirement, Joanna Lewis liked nothing better than gathering friends around her for a party. Her last years were spent as a victim of emphysema but she never had a sign of stiffness in her body. Although she could sometimes hardly walk for breathlessness, she could still touch her toes.

Her second husband predeceased her: she is survived by three sons, one from her first marriage and two from her second.

LESLEY SCOTT-ORDISH

Lesley Scott-Ordish, founder of Pets as Therapy, died of cancer on March 26 aged 65. She was born on March 25, 1932.

RESPONDING to a quintessentially English passion for pets, Lesley Scott-Ordish devoted most of her life to investigating and writing about the bond between humans and animals, particularly dogs.

In the 1970s she detected a growing anti-canine sentiment in Britain. Urban dwellers were becoming weary of uncontrollable dogs bounding around parks, to say nothing of the mess fouling city streets. Intemperate pieces were published in newspapers.

Lesley Scott-Ordish, anxious to counteract this animosity, established the charity Pro Dogs. Dogs, she argued, were of paramount importance to society, and not only to the blind, to the police and to search and rescue operations, but also to the lonely or companionless.

Later she founded a second charity called Pets as Therapy, or PAT Dogs. Volunteers would take their dogs visiting in old people's homes or hospitals. Many inmates would derive a peculiar comfort from their relationships with these animals. There are now almost 10,000 dogs — all carefully vetted for health and temperament — registered with this charity.

Lesley Scott-Ordish with her cocker spaniel visiting a hospital patient

Lesley Scott-Ordish was born Lesley Adey in Solihull, Warwickshire. When she married Peter Ordish in 1953 she combined an old family name of her own with her husband's surname.

In her childhood she did not have a dog, though she and her sister would have loved one, and she was to go on to devote her life to promoting the many positive benefits of dog ownership. It was the hundreds of answers she received to a letter published in a journal which spurred her on, in 1976, to start her charity Pro Dogs.

This organisation, as well as trying to increase public awareness of the importance of dogs, helped to educate owners about the care and social hygiene of their animals.

An annual award ceremony was instituted with prizes for dogs which had shown outstanding devotion to duty or had helped to save lives. Last year, for instance, awards went to a German shepherd for having alerted a woman to the fact that her son was drowning in a lily pond and to a springer spaniel used by Customs and Excise as a sniffer dog. In 1990 Scott-Ordish published *Heroic Dogs* to celebrate the first 11 years of these canine Oscars.

Pro Dogs campaigned against the cruelties of puppy farms, instituting a "better British breeders" scheme, to encourage humane and responsible breeding. It was part of the successful Dangerous Dogs Act reform group and it conducted its own research into the disease Toxocara, which, believed to be spread by canine faeces, causes blindness in children. It was found that this disease is infinitely rarer than the public suspects. Pro Dogs also offers bereavement counselling to those devastated by the loss of their pets: dog owners from all over the country meet to walk their pets and raise money for the charity.

PAT Dogs was founded in 1983 after Lesley Scott-Ordish had received a number of letters from elderly people, grieved at having been parted from their pets after going into a home. The national hospital visiting scheme was a great success.

In 1982 Scott-Ordish helped with the launch of another charity, Dogs for the Deaf. These specially trained animals will alert their owners when a phone or doorbell rings or when a pan boils over in the kitchen, for instance.

On her marriage Lesley Scott-Ordish bought a dog of her own for the first time, a cocker spaniel. In 1996 she published *Cocker Spaniels: An Owner's Guide*. But in latter years she had bred English setters. She herself bore a resemblance to this particular breed. She was tall, slim and elegant.

She is survived by her husband Peter and by their two sons.

PERSONAL COLUMN

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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CONRAD, Sheila Marian Grenville late of 7 Sneath Avenue, LONDON NW11, who died on 18th November 1996. Particulars to: Charles Russell (Solicitors) (ref: JWR) 8-10 Fetter Lane, LONDON EC4A 1RS before 30th June 1997.

HAYTER PETER LLOYD of 18 CANNON STREET, READING BERKS. died on 9th DECEMBER 1996 Particulars to SARJEANT & SHEPPARD Solicitor(s) of 150 FRIAR STREET, READING RG1 1HE before 23rd JUNE 1997

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DATED THIS 10TH DAY OF APRIL 1997
BY ORDER OF THE BOARD
G.A. REEDS, DIRECTOR

REEDS SCHOOL OF MOTORING (UCK) LIMITED
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BY ORDER OF THE BOARD
G.A. REEDS, DIRECTOR

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ON THIS DAY

April 19, 1929

The multi-storey garage is now a feature of most British cities — but not with 27 floors and automated parking.

AN AERIAL GARAGE.

PARKING IN THE SKIES.

(FROM A CORRESPONDENT.)

Standing in the heart of New York, within a few streets of the most congested area in the city, is the Kent Automatic Garage, which has only just been opened to the public. It is the first of a number of others to come, and it marks a turning point in garage construction. Instead of the modest one-floor garages familiar in England, it has 27 storeys, and cars can be parked right up to the 24th.

Let us suppose that a chauffeur wants to garage a car for a few hours, and follow his movements and the movements of his car from the moment he turns into the Kent Garage to the moment his car has been brought down again to him at the end of his parking time.

The car is run into the north yard of the garage. On reaching one of the red doors at the entrance to the lifts the chauffeur gets out and locks up the engine and doors of his car so that no one can tamper with it till he has it back again. From that moment it is in the hands of the garage operatives, who do not touch its engine or move its wheels till it is given back to the chauffeur. The lift door then slowly slides apart (the upper half moving up and the lower half down). There are three double-width lifts in a row at the end of the yard. Out of the lift a flat trolley, or tow-unit, is run by the liftman, who simply presses a button without moving from his position in the lift. When this tow-unit is underneath the car it is raised by the pressure of another button till it lifts the car right off the ground. It is then run back into the lift with the car on it. All this work is done by the lift operator, who does not move from his station in the lift.

We now do what no car-owner is allowed to do, but what the writer had the privilege of doing, and get into the lift with the car. The lift man presses a button, the huge red doors close to, and in a dim half-light we go up, car and all, at the rate of a floor a second, till we reach the 24th floor. Here the doors are opened (again by button) and the car is run out of the lift into the garage on the little tow-unit till it reaches its appointed place. The top floor is smaller than the lower ones, because the New York Zoning Law necessitates the pyramiding of buildings after a certain height, but it holds some 24 cars. The tow-unit is then run back into the lift, where it is taken down to begin its job over again. Each tow-unit is attached to its own lift (two to a lift) and runs on grooves, which continue outside the lift on to the garage floors.

Meantime the chauffeur has been given a check which tells him that his car will be kept there for whatever time he has specified. The rate of garaging depends on whether the car will be wanted at a moment's notice, when it is put in a front row, or whether the owner is willing to wait some time for it.

In this 27-storey building, with its space for 1,250 cars, there are only 12 operatives engaged in garaging cars — an average of one man to 100 cars. There are, however, others employed solely in washing and cleaning cars. In a basement room lit by "daylight" mercury vapour lamps, making their lips look violet and their faces blue, two men are washing a car …

THE TIMES TODAY

SATURDAY APRIL 19 1997

NEWS

Howe attacks Tory advert

■ Lord Howe of Aberavon, the former Conservative Foreign Secretary, led a fierce pro-European backlash last night against the Tory advertisement depicting Tony Blair as a ventriloquist's dummy on the knee of the German Chancellor. Lord Howe, one of John Major's strongest supporters against the Euro-rebels, spoke of "deep disappointment" .... **Pages 1, 9-14, 20, 21**

Donor's blood infects patients with HIV

■ One person has died and two others have been infected with the Aids virus after they were given a transfusion of blood from an HIV-positive donor. The tragedy has exposed a 30-day "window" in the supposedly foolproof system of interview and testing set up in 1985.............................. **Page 1**

Bombs halt transport

The IRA brought Britain's roads and railways to a halt for the third time in a month, sparking a security review................**Pages 1, 2**

Marriage review

The Church of England is to review the medieval requirement that one of a couple must live in a parish before they can have a church wedding there .... **Page 1**

Rape gang sentenced

Seven youths who subjected an Austrian tourist to a "wicked, violent and prolonged" gang rape were sentenced to between 10 and 12 years.............................. **Page 3**

Sister to think again

The sister of a woman dying from leukaemia promised to reconsider her refusal to donate bone marrow for a vital operation........... **Page 4**

Pupil literacy 'falling'

Colin Dexter, the creator of *Inspector Morse*, condemned falling literacy standards in schools **Page 5**

Killer heads for Britain

A triple murderer granted parole after 23 years in an Australian jail is likely to be deported to his home city of Glasgow .... **Page 6**

Militia Day alert

Military bases across the US were on high alert for "Militia Day", the red-letter day for militia groups.............................. **Page 15**

Zairean 'murder plot'

President Mobutu's entourage is reportedly considering plans to kill US expatriates in Zaire to provoke intervention .... **Page 16**

Warlords block path

Greek troops, wary of local warlords, delayed their entry into the anarchic southern Albanian port of Vlore.............................. **Page 17**

Nation's No 1

Russia came to a standstill as fans wished happy birthday to Alla Pugachyova, the flame-haired pop star and grandmother ...... **Page 18**

Thatcher walks into currency crisis

■ For Baroness Thatcher, another Friday, another walkabout. For Shirley Taylor, Tesco till-operator, a nightmare. Lady Thatcher had no cheque guarantee card. All had gone so well. Senior staff stood in line, several women swooned .... **Page 1**

ADRIAN SHERRATT

Fishermen protest off Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, one of many demonstrations around the country yesterday by the Save Britain's Fish campaign. Page 2

OPINION

Please send flowers: This week may well have witnessed the end of an era. The Tories must look back as well as forwards to find their future .... **Page 21**

A poll for Chirac: In calling an election M Chirac would risk not only his party's majority but the future of EMU. That would have momentous consequences .... **Page 21**

Bulldogs and bloodhounds: The nature of change in the Lords is still a matter for dispute, but what should not be is the welcome due to its newest members ...... **Page 21**

COLUMNS

Simon Jenkins: The BBC's election coverage is now a self-regarding, interminable bore. But I offer a prize to the girl who was sent to push a microphone at a somnolent tramp. He told her to "Eff Off" .... **Page 20**

Daniel Johnson: The Tory photomontage depicting Tony Blair as a ventriloquist's dummy is a cruel caricature. The German Chancellor certainly did not find the Labour leader easy to manipulate when they last met. Herr Kohl was reportedly disappointed by a lack of European idealism .. **Page 20**

BUSINESS

Unclaimed shares: Nearly 200,000 members of the Alliance & Leicester Building Society have failed to claim shares estimated to be worth a total of £257.5 million ahead of Monday's stock market flotation .... **Page 25**

Profit warning: Racal Electronics has issued its second profits warning in five months...................... **Page 25**

Markets: *The FTSE 100 rose 11.6 to 4,310.5.* The pound rose .22 cents to $1.6310 but fell 1.11 pfennigs to DM2.7991, leaving the pound index at 99.8.......................... **Page 28**

SPORT

Football: Oliver Holt talks to Liverpool's Robbie Fowler about his status as the latest team talisman .... **Page 48**

Cricket: Mark Butcher and Jason Gallian staked their claims to England Test places with centuries for England A against The Rest at Edgbaston .... **Page 45**

Snooker: The world championship starts today in Sheffield.................... **Page 44**

LETTERS

Roy Hattersley, Lord Howe and David Steel on Europe; election 97 .... **Page 21**

ARTS

Minority interest: "Are spirits sagging at Channel 5 following reports that its daytime programmes are being watched by absolutely nobody?" Richard Morrison asks..... **Page 19**

Hello, Goodbye: Neil Simon's *The Goodbye Girl* has opened in London as a musical. "It will doubtless entertain those prepared to switch off their native cynicism." .... **Page 19**

CAR 97

Triumph booms back to the top................... **Page 1**

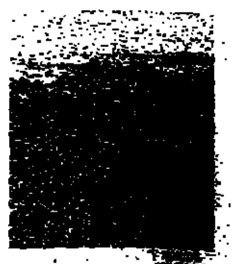
SECTIONS

MAGAZINE

Elisabeth Shue: on the *path to sainthood* **Page 10**
Local hero: Donnie Munro on the stump... **Page 16**
House style .... **Page 41**

Weekend

Genteel Utopia: The secret life of Surrey..... **Pages 1, 2**



Party lines: Dressing with seasonal style .... **Page 3**
Property: Stained glass; oversize rooms **Pages 7-10**

10 15

Super striker: Red Devil Gunnar Solskjaer **Page 6**
Beck to future: The rise of Kate Beckinsale...... **Page 8**

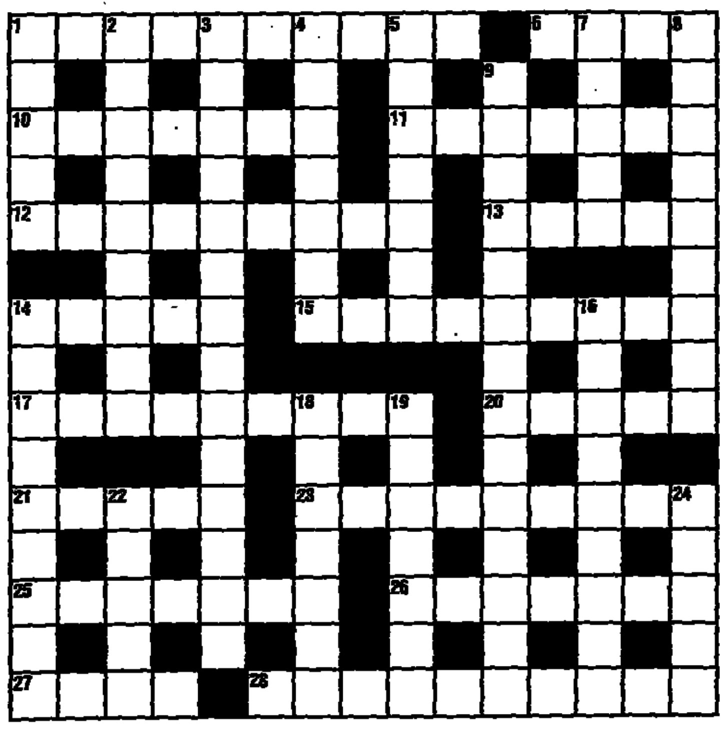
dire

Cracking America: British TV heads west....... **Page 4**
Food........................ **Page 7**
What's On....... **Pages 15-21**
TV, radio guide.........**23-52**

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,458

A £20 book token will be awarded to the senders of the first five correct solutions opened next Thursday. Entries should be addressed to: The Times, Saturday Crossword Competition, PO Box 486, Virginia Street, London E1 9DD. The names of the winners and the solution will be published next Saturday.

Name/Address ....



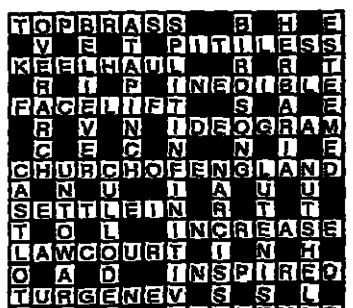
ACROSS

1 Drug intervention suppresses cold (10).
6 Compliment his exquisite fish starters? (4).
10 Weapon injured girl (7).
11 Distance made, say, by a cart on the way back (7).
12 Maids initially switched fruit in centre for trader (9).
13 The best religious education received in academic stream (5).
14 Free from net (5).
15 He tried to get Parliament to rise unexpectedly early (3,6).
17 School rejected exam questions and corresponding material (9).
20 Personal physician comes to the fore in flood (5).
21 Forbidden to include some blood groups (5).
23 Tortured, being without answer — thoroughly examined (9).
25 Request end of wretched waiting around (7).
26 Material issue for sailors leads to strike (7).
27 Just how did Wenceslas see the snow? (4).
28 Get her play broadcast for wireless system (10).

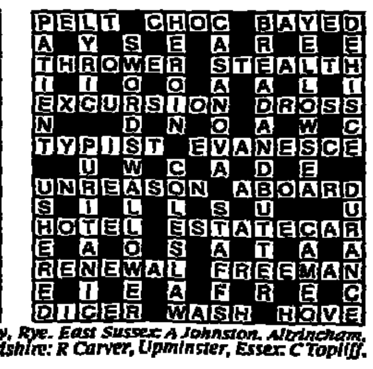
DOWN

1 Coffee is second to tea (5).
2 Disadvantage of tired out people at end of project (9).
3 Penned in horror, a description of such irrational fear? (14).
4 Demanding audition (7).
5 For long journey, take twenty-four books of verse (7).
7 Cast in sky, finally dropped (5).
8 Privileged person thus accepted as a "lodger" (9).
9 Coming from the Crown, a sort of free house (5-3-6).
14 This artist could briefly be taken to be politically correct (9).
16 His job was raising the consciousness of the workers (7-2).
18 Groupie travelling in primitive transport (7).
19 Go back and start to read up Onegin (7).
22 Lapel pin reads "Hector" — that's not right (5).
24 Sucker who lays his cards on the table? (5).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,452



Solution to Puzzle No 20,457



LAST WEEK'S WINNERS: P B R Gracey, Rye, East Sussex; A Johnston, Altrincham, Cheshire; B E Atkins, St Albans, Hertfordshire; R Carver, Upminster, Essex; C Topliff, Chesham, Buckinghamshire.

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HOURS OF DARKNESS

TODAY

Sun rises:	Sun sets:
5.57 am	8.04 pm
Moon sets	Moon rises
4.44 am	4.35 pm

Full moon April 22

London 8.04 pm to 5.56 am
Bristol 8.14 pm to 6.04 am
Edinburgh 8.29 pm to 5.55 am
Manchester 8.17 pm to 5.58 am
Penzance 8.23 pm to 6.19 am

TOMORROW

Sun rises:	Sun sets:
5.55 am	8.06 pm
Moon sets	Moon rises
5.07 am	5.38 pm

Full moon April 22

London 8.06 pm to 5.52 am
Bristol 8.15 pm to 6.02 am
Edinburgh 8.30 pm to 5.53 am
Manchester 8.19 pm to 5.56 am
Penzance 8.24 pm to 6.17 am

HIGH TIDES

TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
London Bridge	00.26	6.1	12.57	6.5
Aberdeen	00.18	3.6	12.26	3.6
Avonmouth	05.51	11.3	18.20	11.6
Belfast	09.47	3.1	22.25	3.0
Cardiff	05.37	10.5	18.06	10.8
Devonport	04.17	4.9	16.48	4.9
Dover	10.09	5.7	22.23	6.0
Dublin (N Wall)	10.42	3.7	23.05	3.6
Falmouth	03.48	4.7	16.19	4.7
Greenock	11.21	2.9	-	-
Harwich	10.52	3.5	23.07	3.4
Holyhead	09.23	4.9	21.49	4.9
Hull (Albert D)	05.21	7.4	17.29	7.7
Ilfracombe	04.47	7.8	17.12	7.9
King's Lynn	05.27	5.5	17.31	5.7
Leith	01.28	4.6	13.50	4.7
Liverpool	10.10	8.2	22.33	8.4
Lowestoft	08.59	2.2	20.39	2.2
Margate	11.12	4.2	23.15	4.2
Milford Haven	05.03	5.8	17.27	5.9
Newquay	03.59	5.9	16.22	6.0
Oban	04.47	3.3	17.15	3.4
Penzance	03.28	4.7	15.53	4.8
Portland	05.26	1.4	18.01	1.4
Portsmouth	10.20	3.9	22.43	4.2
Shoreham	10.14	5.2	22.35	5.6
Southampton	09.46	4.0	22.09	4.2
Swansea	05.05	8.2	17.30	8.4
Tees	02.23	4.5	14.36	4.7
Walton-on-N	10.48	3.6	23.02	3.6

All times GMT. Hights in metres

HIGHEST & LOWEST

Yesterday: Highest day temp: Newquay, Cornwall, 15C (59F); lowest day max: Baltasound, Shetland, 7C (45F); highest rainfall: Stornoway, Outer Hebrides, 0.05in; highest sunshine: Ryde, Isle of Wight, 12.9hr

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FORECAST

☐ **General:** Scotland, Northern Ireland and most of England and Wales will have a cloudy start, with patchy rain or drizzle. Clearer, drier conditions will spread west to all parts during the morning. The rest of the day should be dry with sunny periods.

☐ **London, SE England, Central S England, E Midlands, W Midlands, Channel Isles, SW England, S Wales, N Wales, NW England, Lake District, Isle of Man, Central N England, N Ireland:** rather cloudy, some rain or drizzle, many places dry. Becoming brighter, sunny periods in afternoon. Winds light or moderate, northeast. Cool, max 12C (54F).

☐ **E Anglia, E England, NE England, Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, Moray Firth, NE Scotland:** bright with sunny periods, dry. Winds moderate, northeast. Cold, max 11C (52F).

☐ **SW Scotland, Glasgow, Central Highlands, Argyll, NW Scotland:** cloudy start with drizzle in places, becoming brighter with sunny periods. Winds light, east. Cool, max 11C (52F).

☐ **Orkney, Shetland:** bright or sunny periods, dry. Wind moderate, northerly. Cold, max 7C (45F).

☐ **Outlook:** mostly settled, rain at times in northern Scotland.

AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

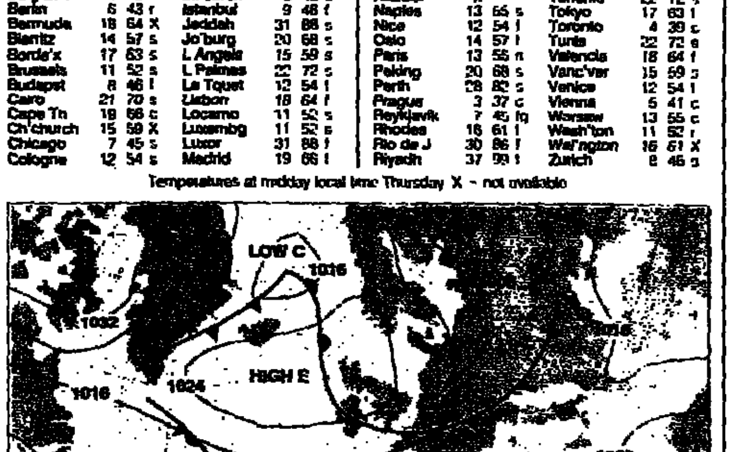
24 hrs to 5 pm: b=bright; c=cloud; d=drizzle; ds=dust storm; du=dull; f=fair; fg=fog; g=gale; h=hail; r=rain; sh=shower; sl=sleet; sn=snow; s=sun; t=thunder

	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	Max F	
Aberdeen	X				
Anglesey	0.4	-	13	55	c
Aspatria	-	-	11	52	c
Aviemore	0.7	-	9	48	c
Belfast	0.4	-	12	54	c
Birmingham	0.6	-	12	54	c
Bognor R	12.8	-	15	59	s
Bournem'th	12.3	-	15	59	s
Bristol	5.6	-	12	54	b
Buxton	-	-	9	48	c
Cardiff	2.9	-	11	52	c
Clacton	X	-	9	48	b
Cleethorpes	X				
Colwyn Bay	-	-	11	52	c
Cromer	1.4	0.01	10	50	c
Dunbar	X				
Eastbourne	X				
Edinburgh	X				
Eskdalemuir	-	-	10	50	c
Exmouth	11.6	-	13	55	s
Falmouth	11.9	-	12	54	s
Fishguard	-	-	10	50	c
Folkestone	10.1	-	12	54	s
Glasgow	0.7	-	14	57	c
Guernsey	11.3	-	13	55	s
Hastings	12.0	-	12	54	s
Hayling I.	12.6	-	13	55	s
Herne Bay	X				
Hove	9.8	-	14	57	s
Hunstanton	X	-	11	52	c
Ilfracombe	X				
Isle of Man	3.2	-	13	55	b
Jersey	12.1	-	15	59	s
Kinloss	-	0.01	10	50	d
Leeds	X				
Lerwick	3.2	0.02	8	46	sh
Leuchars	4.8	-	12	54	b
Littlehmptn	11.8	-	13	55	s
London	5.5	-	11	52	s
Lowestoft	X				
Manchester	-	-	12	54	c
Margate	6.9	-	10	50	s
Minehead	X				
Morecambe	-	-	12	54	c
Newcastle	3.2	-	11	52	s
Newquay	10.6	-	15	59	s
Norwich	2.5	0.01	11	52	c
Oxford	2.4	-	10	50	c
Penzance	X	-	14	57	s
Poole	X				
Prestatyn	X				
Ross-o-wye	2.1	-	12	54	b
Ryde	12.9	-	13	55	s
Salcombe	11.7	-	13	55	s
Sandown	12.5	-	14	57	s
Sauntn Snd	9.4	-	14	57	s
Scarboro'	0.7	0.01	11	52	d
Shanklin	12.4	-	12	54	s
Shrewsbury	0.3	-	11	52	c
Skegness	-	-	11	52	c
Southend	1.7	-	11	52	c
Southsea	11.2	-	13	55	s
Stornoway	-	0.05	10	50	sh
Swanage	12.3	-	12	54	s
Teignmouth	11.0	-	13	55	s
Tenby	0.2	-	11	52	c
Tiree	10.5	-	11	52	s
Torquay	12.5	-	14	57	s
Tynemouth	-	-	9	48	c
Ventnor	12.5	-	15	59	s
West-s-mare	7.0	-	13	55	b
Weymouth	12.7	-	13	55	s

ABROAD

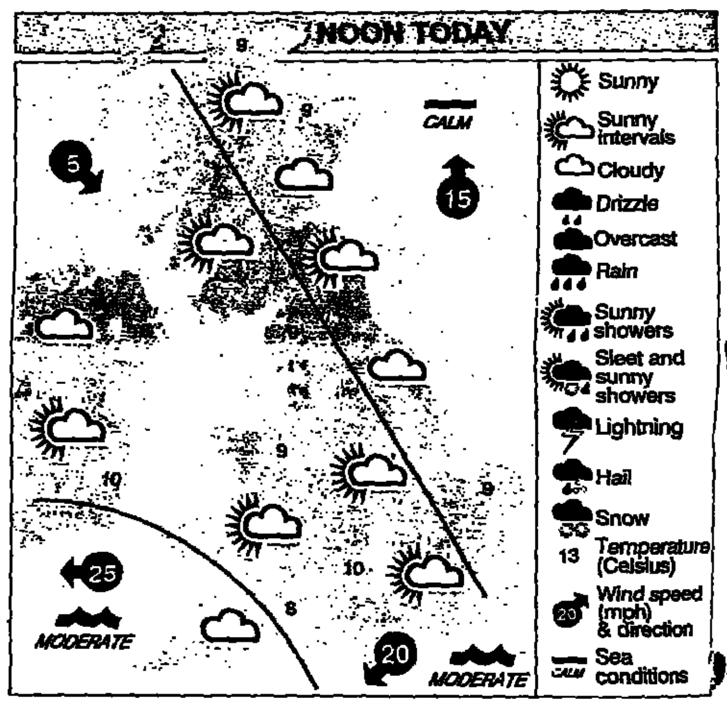
	C	F	
Ajaccio	12	54	f
Akrotiri	17	63	f
Alex'dria	20	68	s
Algiers	21	70	s
Amst'dm	12	54	s
Athens	16	61	f
B Aires	29	84	s
Bahrain	28	82	f
Bangkok	35	95	s
Barbados	29	84	f
Barcelona	16	61	f
Beirut	17	63	f
Belgrade	6	43	r
Berlin	6	43	r
Bermuda	18	64	X
Biarritz	14	57	s
Borde'x	17	63	s
Brussels	11	52	s
Budapest	8	46	f
Cairo	21	70	s
Cape Tn	19	66	c
Ch'church	15	59	X
Chicago	7	45	s
Cologne	12	54	s
Corfu	13	55	f
C'phagn	11	52	s
Dublin	12	54	f
Dubrovnik	9	48	s
Faro	20	68	s
Florence	13	55	s
Frankfurt	10	50	s
Funchal	19	66	s
Geneva	10	50	s
Gibraltar	21	70	f
Helsinki	8	46	f
Hong K	23	73	c
Innsbrck	6	43	s
Istanbul	9	48	f
Jeddah	31	88	s
Jo'burg	20	68	s
L Angels	15	59	s
L Palmas	22	72	s
Le Touquet	12	54	f
Lisbon	18	64	f
Locarno	11	52	s
Luxembg	11	52	s
Luxor	31	88	f
Madrid	19	66	f
Majorca	21	70	f
Malaga	24	75	f
Malta	21	70	s
Melb'rne	16	61	c
Mexico C	21	70	f
Miami	28	82	s
Milan	14	57	f
Montreal	6	43	f
Moscow	11	52	c
Munich	4	39	c
N Delhi	29	84	s
N York	12	54	r
Nairobi	X		
Naples	13	55	s
Nice	12	54	f
Oslo	14	57	f
Paris	13	55	r
Peking	20	68	s
Perth	28	82	s
Prague	3	37	c
Reykjavik	7	45	fg
Rhodes	16	61	f
Rio de J	30	86	f
Riyadh	37	99	s
Rome	14	57	s
S Fr'isco	17	63	s
S Paulo	20	68	r
Salzburg	5	41	c
Santiago	17	63	c
Seoul	12	54	c
Sing'por	32	90	t
St'kholm	9	48	s
Strasb'rg	11	52	s
Sydney	25	77	s
Tangier	20	68	f
Tel Aviv	18	64	f
Tenerife	22	72	s
Tokyo	17	63	f
Toronto	4	39	c
Tunis	22	72	s
Valencia	18	64	f
Vanc'ver	15	59	s
Venice	12	54	f
Vienna	5	41	c
Warsaw	13	55	c
Wash'ton	11	52	r
Wel'ngton	16	61	X
Zurich	8	46	s

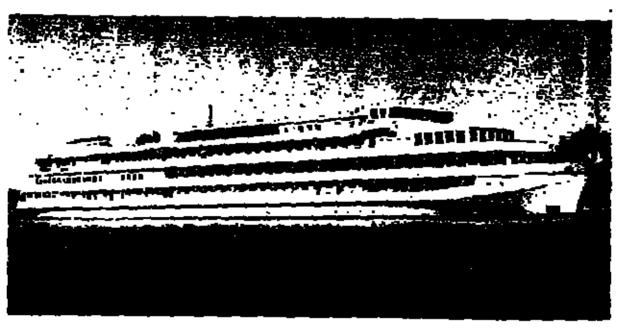
Temperatures at midday local time Thursday X - not available



Changes to the chart: high E will slowly decline where it is, lows C and F will move southeast and deepen

NOON TODAY





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THE TIMES 2

SATURDAY APRIL 19 1997

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Graham Searjeant on worries over windfalls
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SPORT
The striking rise of Liverpool's boy in the black stuff
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THE HIDDEN ASSETS AT CLAYDON HEELEY
PAGE 27

MARTIN BEDDALL

Richard Harvey, left, finance director, George Poole, chairman, and Alan Bridgewater, chief executive, in the wide open spaces at the London Arena yesterday

Big vote in favour of NU float

By Marianne Curphey

AN *overwhelming majority* of Norwich Union members have voted in favour of a stock *market flotation, bringing to* an end 200 years of mutuality.

Although only 180 people turned up to vote at the extraordinary general meeting *at London Arena* yesterday, more than 1.8 million cast postal votes in favour of *flotation, representing* 98.9 per cent. Although attendance was smaller than the 1,000 expected, members spoke passionately about their wish for NU *to remain mutual.*

Nearly three million NU customers will receive free shares. Two-thirds of those will receive an average windfall *of about £1,000 based on share price estimates* of between 220p and 265p each.

Flotation is planned for June and about 1.3 billion free shares will now be distributed to members. NU is raising £1.75 billion on the stock market and the new plc will *be worth up to £5 billion.*

Co-op injunction forces Regan to delay £1bn bid

By Jason Nissé

ANDREW REGAN, the 31-year-old entrepreneur, was yesterday forced to postpone his planned £1.15 billion bid for the Co-operative Wholesale Society after the CWS *obtained an injunction* against the use of supposedly confidential information passed to Mr Regan by Allan Green, CWS's retail chief.

Galileo, a special purpose company backed by Mr Regan's Lanica Trust, was set *to reveal details of a two-stage* offer for CWS when the injunction was granted.

Galileo is due in court on Tuesday, when it hopes to have *the injunction lifted.* A spokesman said Galileo still intends *to make an offer for CWS.* "This is a distracting and frustrating action."

Lanica, whose shares were suspended in February when news of its interest in CWS first leaked, told the Stock Exchange via its advisers, *Hambros and HSBC James* Capel, that it was about to make an announcement about the bid yesterday morning.

But nothing appeared until nearly 6pm when Galileo said it had been "prevented from making its proposals public *today as planned as a result of* being served with an injunction obtained by CWS".

The injunction, granted by Mr Justice Lightman, prevented Mr Regan, his business associate David Lyons, *Lanica, Galileo and Mr Green* — who on Thursday was suspended by CWS with his colleague, David Chambers — from using any CWS confidential information.

Mr Lightman listed confidential documents that the *defendants must return to CWS* by Tuesday. These include board and strategy papers, management accounts, profit forecasts, legal and financial advice given by *outside* advisers and computer disks containing membership details.

The court heard of a conversation between Alan Prescott, CWS's controller of production and property, and Mr Green on Thursday in which *Mr Green was challenged* about the disappearance of *internal documents. After that* meeting Mr Green, who was paid £240,000 by the CWS last year, was suspended as well as Mr Chambers, whose salary exceeded £200,000.

Galileo, which is also backed by Schroders Investment *Management, Jupiter Tyndall* and Killik & Co, was set to bid £1.15 billion for the whole of CWS before the injunction. It planned to offer each of CWS's 300,000 active members £1,000 each for the business, with larger payments to 300 corporate *members.*

To make this offer Galileo needs to convert CWS to a public limited company and it was hoping to call an *extraordinary general meeting.* This needs the support of at least *ten corporate members.* Galileo yesterday said it had sufficient backing, and enjoyed a great deal of support from within the CWS.

However, CWS insiders poured scorn on the bidding structure, pointing out that *CWS has two million members* and the Co-operative Movement has eight million.

To convert CWS to a plc would need the support of 75 *per cent* of members and the approval of the Registrar of Friendly Socities. Graham Melmoth, CWS's chief executive, said the CWS's 30-strong board had unanimously rejected talks with Mr Regan. The board represents corporate members commanding 70 per cent of CWS votes.

A&L says £250m of shares yet to be claimed

By Caroline Merrell

NEARLY 200,000 members of the Alliance & Leicester Building Society have failed to claim shares *estimated to be* worth a total of £257.5 million.

The unclaimed shares represent 9 per cent of the share capital of the society, which *makes its stock market debut* on Monday. The shares will be held by the society for three years, and will accrue dividends. They will then be sold at the prevailing market price but the missing owners remain free to claim them at any time.

If the pattern is repeated with the flotations of the Halifax, Woolwich, Northern Rock and Norwich Union, then by the autumn up to £2 billion in *shares may remain* unclaimed.

When Abbey National floated in 1989, *more than* 10 per cent of the former members failed to collect their shares.

Abbey then embarked on an extensive programme to trace *the owners of the unclaimed* shares. In 1992, Abbey sold the outstanding 29 million *unclaimed shares for a total of* £101 million.

Alliance & Leicester shares are expected to start trading at about 520p. The price is nearly 13 *per cent higher than the* estimate in the transfer document, sent to members in *October. This would lift the* average payout to each of the 2.2 million members to £1,300. The price is expected to be further boosted in June when *the newly fledged bank joins* the FT-SE All-share index as institutional demand for the *shares is lifted by the index-*tracking funds.

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Jardine acts over PNG mercenary allegations

By Robert Miller

RUPERT McCOWAN, a director *of Jardine Fleming*, the Hong Kong investment bank, has been suspended after allegations were made linking him to the mercenaries hired by *the government of Papua* New Guinea (PNG).

A spokesman for JF, in which Robert Fleming, the UK private merchant bank, has a 50 per cent stake, *said that* during a commission of inquiry into the hiring of the mercenaries, *who were led by* Colonel Tim Spicer, a Briton, it had been alleged that Mr *McCowan had helped to raise* funds for the mercenary force, then transferred the money to a *Hong Kong bank account.*

The JF spokesman added: "Allegations have been made to the commission which are both very, very specific and, *if* accurate, very serious. We have asked an independent law firm to investigate and report back. We felt it appropriate that *Mr McCowan be* suspended."

Mr McCowan worked as an *adviser to PNG on the* flotation last year of the state-owned Oregon Mines. Jardine *Fleming* was responsible for handling the global placement of the Oregon shares, over which there were allegations of share misplacements. Salomon *Brothers* subsequently cleared JF of any wrongdoing.

Insurance chief's pay package rises 24%

By Marianne Curphey, insurance correspondent

MICHAEL BRIGHT, chief executive and co-founder of Independent Insurance, saw *his total remuneration rise to* almost £1 million last year. A 24 per cent rise in salary and benefits lifted the value of the package to £969,000.

His basic salary increased to £294,000 from £265,000. There was also a profit-related bonus of £334,000, increased from £241,000 previously. Pension contributions rose to £314,000 from £251,000, according the the company's report and accounts, published yesterday.

Mr Bright built up Independent *from a privately owned* business into a publicly listed company worth more than £325 million within a decade.

In line with company policy, *Mr Bright was granted no* share options last year. Garth Ramsay, chairman of Independent and a member of the remuneration committee, said *the increases were justified* because Independent's pre-tax profits had risen 46 per cent to £40 million.

He added: "Shareholders are pleased with our progress and we have never had a complaint about directors' pay." *In the past year* Independent shares have risen sharply from 456p to 713½p.

Working week, page 27

Racal issues second warning

By Paul Durman

RACAL Electronics has issued its second profits warning in five months, prompting its shares *to fall 12 per cent* to 243½p.

Racal said its data products arm, which makes devices to help computers to communicate with *one another*, will lose £7 million in the six months to March 31. In December the company said this business would *show a return* to modest profits.

One cynical investor, a veteran of past disappointments, said: "That's what *Racal* does, *isn't it?*" Another large institution suggested it was time for Sir Ernest Harrison, Racal's chairman, *to think about selling the group, following the example of his recent* £1.2 billion sale of Chubb Security to Williams Holdings. The sec*urity business was once part of Racal.*

Racal now expects to report annual pre-tax profits of about £40 million — £30 million less than *its target last June.*

David Elsbury, chief executive, blamed the loss on a three-month delay in launching a *key product. Racal* needed extra time to straighten out bugs in 350,000 lines of computer code. Mr Elsbury said: *"It's not bad news, it's a slight delay. Paul* Kozlowski has done a fantastic job turning this division around." He said 1997 *would be a turning point, with all Racal's* businesses *"beginning to sing from the* same songsheet for the first time in five years". Racal did not intend to break it*self up — an idea often floated in the City.*

Mr Elsbury added: "We believe that the inherent value in the Racal share *price is far higher than the break-up* values being suggested." He said these range from 300p to 450p a share.

Racal said its two principal businesses in network services, its telecommunications arm and defence electronics, both *performed well. Other parts of the group* experienced difficult trading conditions.

Tempus, page 28

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	4310.5	(+11.6)
Yield	3.75%	
FTSE All share	2092.44	(+3.34)
Nikkei	18352.14	(+258.73)
New York:		
Dow Jones	6688.70	(+30.10)*
S&P Composite	764.72	(+2.95)*

US RATE

Federal Funds	$5\frac{5}{16}$%*	($5\frac{7}{16}$%)
Long Bond	$94\frac{17}{32}$*	($94\frac{17}{32}$)
Yield	7.07%*	(7.07%)

LONDON MONEY

3-mth Interbank	$6\frac{11}{32}$%	($6\frac{11}{32}$%)
Liffe long gilt future (Jun)	$109\frac{3}{4}$	($110\frac{5}{32}$)

STERLING

New York:		
$	1.6320*	(1.6298)
London:		
$	1.6313	(1.6288)
DM	2.7997	(2.8108)
FFr	9.4239	(9.4595)
SFr	2.3825	(2.3960)
Yen	205.49	(205.18)
£ Index	99.8	(100.0)

DOLLAR

London:		
DM	1.7143*	(1.7245)
FFr	5.7740*	(5.8050)
SFr	1.4585*	(1.4640)
Yen	125.90*	(125.93)
$ Index	105.7	(105.9)

Tokyo close Yen 126.05

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (Jul)	$18.10	($17.90)

GOLD

London close	$342.45	($343.15)

* denotes midday trading price

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TT11

Chemring shares hit by warning

Shares of Chemring, the defence group, lost a third of their value as the defence group gave warning that the downturn in orders for missile decoys had failed to recover, leading to the first interim loss in the company's history. It is selling its fireworks business, clothing division and head office to reduce its £16.2 million debt pile. Together with the costs of moving to a smaller factory, it has taken £8 million of provisions in the first half. Sir William Barlow, who became chairman last month, said the company will return to profit by the second half. Its shares fell 62½p to 122½p. Tempus, page 28

Minerva rise

Minerva, the newly floated property group, made a pre-tax profit of £8.5 million in the six months to January 31. The results, which compare to a £2.2 million loss in the same period last year, include about four months prior to last November's listing. Minerva is advising on one of the bids for the Government's DSS property portfolio, comprising 700 buildings. If the Mapeley Holdings consortium wins, it will act as property development partner alongside Burford and Argent. There is no interim dividend.

Regalian deal

Regalian Properties has bought an office, retail and Odeon cinema complex at Marble Arch, London, for an estimated £20 million. It includes 88,000 square feet of offices, 20,000 square feet of shop space and 43,000 square feet of basement car park. The offices will be refurbished in an attempt to woo international companies seeking relatively small London headquarters.

Peek tumbles

Peek shares lost 42 per cent of their value after the traffic control systems company warned investors it was heading for a half-year loss of £1.5 million. However, Peek forecast a recovery in the second half. The shares, which traded at 130p a year ago, closed down 31½p at 44p.

Evans to leave

Howard Evans is to step down as finance director of Courtaulds, the chemicals group. Mr Evans, who will stay on to present the company's results next month, will be replaced by Patrick Shanley, currently financial controller.

Telefonica deal gives entry to expanding Latin American market

BT coup outflanks arch-rival

From Eric Reguly
in Madrid

Sir Iain Vallance, left, BT chairman, with Juan Vilallonga of Telefonica and Bert Roberts of MCI after yesterday's accord

BRITISH Telecom scored a victory yesterday over AT&T, its American arch-rival, when it lured Telefonica of Spain into its $30 billion global partnership with MCI.

BT, which is taking a £280m stake in Telefonica, said the accord provides access to the fast-growing Latin American market expected to be worth about $60 billion by 2000.

Telefonica, the world's ninth largest phone company, is the leading supplier of telecom services to the Spanish-speaking world. It has controlling stakes or equity investments in Chile, Peru, Argentina, Brazil and Puerto Rico. In Latin America, Telefonica has more than ten million phone lines in service, almost a million mobile-phone companies and more than a million cable TV customers.

The immediate defection of Telefonica from Unisource, AT&T's alliance of European phone companies, is expected to trigger a significant global telecoms realignment.

With Telefonica at its side, Concert, as the BT-MCI alliance will be known, will be able to sell voice, data, video and Internet services to many of the largest Spanish and Latin American corporations. The Telefonica alliance is wide-ranging and will trigger billions of pounds of investment. In Spain, Telefonica will act as the exclusive distributor of Concert services. In Latin America, Telefonica and MCI will form a joint venture.

The venture will construct Pan American fibre and submarine cable networks whose initial costs were estimated at hundreds of millions of pounds. It also intends to invest in the national phone companies when they are privatised. The Colombian phone company is to be privatised in the next year.

BT's £280 million investment will give it a 2 per cent stake in Telefonica. In turn, The Spanish company will buy 1 per cent of BT for a similar amount. Concert will inherit the Telefonica stake when BT completes its takeover of MCI. Concert's European and United States regulatory approvals are expected by the autumn.

BT, AT&T and Deutsche Telekom are each trying to lure NTT of Japan, the world's largest phone company, into their camps. Sir Iain Vallance, BT chairman, who is to become co-chairman of Concert, said: "The flushing out of the Americas leaves Asia-Pacific to deal with." NTT, however, does not seem in a hurry to sign up foreign partners.

Burford error leads to emergency action

By Jason Nissé

BURFORD Holdings, the property group headed by Nigel Wray, has been forced to send out an emergency extra notice for its annual meeting after learning that it had failed to ask shareholders to approve the appointment of three directors.

The embarrassing omission was pointed out to Burford by Pirc, the corporate governance lobby group. In the last year Burford has appointed three new directors — Nick Brigstocke, John Anderson and Duncan Moss — and its articles of association require that they are submitted for re-election to the board.

Burford had been advised by Clifford Chance, its lawyers, that their re-election was not required because of the demerger of the group's leisure interests into Trocadero two years ago. However, after consultation with Pirc and the National Association of Pension Funds, Burford opted to put the vote to shareholders.

Julian Gleek, Burford's finance director, said: "It is a technical point." Mr Gleek recently stood down as finance director of Trocadero.

Nick Leslau, Burford's chief executive, is also standing down from Trocadero ahead of that company's move from the Alternative Investment Market to the main market.

Helene set to cancel listing after talks fail

HELENE, the clothing group, plans to cancel its listing on the London Stock Exchange after breaking off talks with Dyckhoff, the German retailer, about a reverse takeover (Sarah Cunningham writes).

Helene, whose shares were suspended at 6p six months ago after it reached an initial agreement with Dyckhoff, ended talks after the German company sought court protection from its creditors last month. Dyckhoff is controlled by Harold Tillman, who last year overturned a DTI disqualification as a company director. Three Helene subsidiaries are still trading and the board is discussing their future with their management.

SE moving towards greater transparency

By Adam Jones

THE Stock Exchange took a huge stride yesterday towards freeing itself of allegations that it allows market-makers too great an influence.

The Exchange said it aims to remove rules that allow publication of some share deals to be delayed up to five days. All trades through its new order book being introduced in October will have to be announced immediately.

Earlier plans for order-driven trading had included a delayed publication component to avoid frightening away big buyers and sellers. This led to criticism from MPs, who accused the Exchange of bowing to pressure from market makers. The SIB also made it clear that it wanted greater transparency.

Richard Kilsby, the Exchange's director of market services, said immediate publication would reassure clients that the quote they were getting in the market was the latest price. The change was possible because Exchange members have become more confident about the worked trade system that will exist alongside the order book.

This will allow a degree of secrecy while a big trade is going through. Details are still being worked out but it is likely to apply to deals six to ten times larger than average.

Liberty plans London and Tokyo expansion

By Sarah Cunningham

LIBERTY will spend £40 million revamping and expanding its flagship Regent Street store over the next three years. It also plans to open its first store in Tokyo. Planning permission is being sought to expand the Regent Street store from 90,000 sq ft to 140,000 sq ft. Funding will come from cashflow and increased borrowings.

As well as planning a store in downtown Tokyo, Liberty is looking to open airport shops overseas. It currently operates four outlets at Heathrow.

The company, which closed its provincial shops last year as part of a restructuring, yesterday reported pre-tax profits of £4.4 million for the year to February 1, compared to a loss of £16.6 million a year earlier. Regent Street sales increased 8 per cent in the second half and have risen by double figures in the first ten weeks of this year.

Adjusted earnings rose to 9.23p a share (3.58p) and the company has restored its final dividend, which went unpaid last year. It will pay 1.85p per share on June 9 — the same as last year's interim. The company now plans to pay 30 per cent of its dividend as an interim and 70 per cent as final. Future dividends are likely to be modest by historical standards, the board said.

Tempus, page 28

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Housebuying season enjoys steady start

THE traditional spring start to the housebuying season was steady rather than spectacular. The Building Societies Association (BSA) said yesterday that net advances in March, which included Easter, rose to £962 million from a depressed £670 million in February. Gross advances increased to £3.1 billion from £2.6 billion, while approvals totalled £3.5 billion (February: £2.8 billion). Adrian Coles, director general of the BSA, said: "The growing signs of health in the housing market are increasing the prospects for the sustainable growth in lending, transactions and prices in 1997."

☐ M4, the measure of broad money supply, rose 11.2 per cent last month, above the Treasury's monitoring range of 3 to 9 per cent, and 18 per cent above the same period last year.

Eagles AIM is £750,000

SHEFFIELD EAGLES, the rugby league club, is raising £750,000 through a flotation on the Alternative Investment Market, which will value the company at £3.9 million. The money is to fund the recruitment of players. The company is controlled by Paul Thompson, chief executive of Sanderson Electronics, who is underwriting the placing. He owns a 62.5 stake and is not selling any shares. Eagle plc is placing 2.25 million shares at 40p, with dealings beginning on May 21.

Hearts to diversify

HEART OF MIDLOTHIAN, the Edinburgh football club that is joining the stock market, is considering a move into basketball, hockey or rubgy when it completes its new stadium. The club, which is raising £5.1 million to complete work on the stadium, does not intend to restrict itself to soccer. Hearts will be valued at £14.2 million, with shares placed at 140p. The club made a loss of £855,000 before tax in the eight months to January 31. Shares begin trading on May 19.

Northern Foods deal

NORTHERN FOODS has bought the Scottish Pride UHT milk business from the receivers for £8 million. The sale follows that of Scottish Pride's fresh milk business to Robert Wiseman Dairies for £4.8 million. The UHT business employs 118 and had turnover of £30 million last year. Northern Foods, which will also pay for stock at valuation, said the processing plant in Kirkcudbright, Dumfries and Galloway will become part of its own Northern Dairies UHT operation.

Beales issues warning

SHARES of Beales Hunter, the refrigeration and electrical equipment group, fell to 126p from 149p after it said profits for the year to May would fall short of expectations and would include a £500,000 exceptional charge. A number of large industrial contracts have suffered delays and business with food retailers has fallen. However, the company said trading in the electrical and textile divisions has been in line with expectations, and the board intends to maintain the final dividend at 7.8p.

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia $	2.20	2.04
Austria Sch	20.67	19.17
Belgium Fr	60.81	56.31
Canada $	2.398	2.228
Cyprus Cyp£ .	0.874	0.809
Denmark Kr ...	11.23	10.43
Finland Mkk ...	8.98	8.30
France Fr	9.87	9.17
Germany Dm .	2.96	2.74
Greece Dr	460	430
Hong Kong $	13.38	12.28
Iceland	127	107
Ireland Pt	1.11	1.03
Israel Shk	5.84	5.19
Italy Lira	2919	2719
Japan Yen	219.80	203.80
Malta	0.660	0.605
Netherlds Gld	3.332	3.062
New Zealand $	2.51	2.29
Norway Kr	12.09	11.29
Portugal Esc ..	293.00	273.00
S Africa Rd	7.98	7.08
Spain Pta	247.50	230.50
Sweden Kr	13.33	12.33
Switzerland Fr	2.52	2.32
Turkey Lira	223667	209667
USA $	1.730	1.600

Rates for small denomination banknotes only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

THE SUNDAY TIMES

"Few people in Britain have heard of Electronic Data Systems (EDS), the Texas computer-services group. For those familiar with the name it evokes Ross Perot, Mark Thatcher, government contracts and maybe a whiff of controversy. Through those government contracts it already touches almost every citizen in Britain . . ."

Business — The Sunday Times tomorrow

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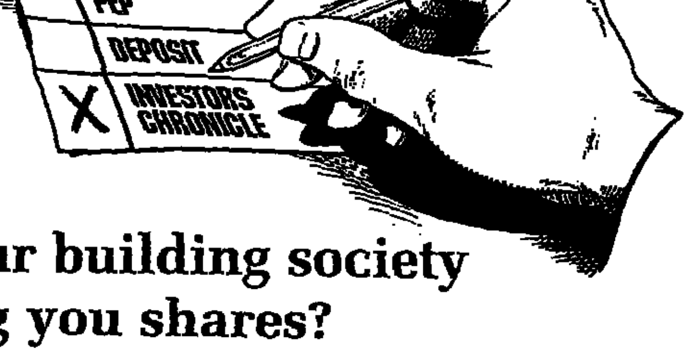

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INVESTORS CHRONICLE
THE CITY INSIDE OUT

A WORKING WEEK FOR: MICHAEL BRIGHT

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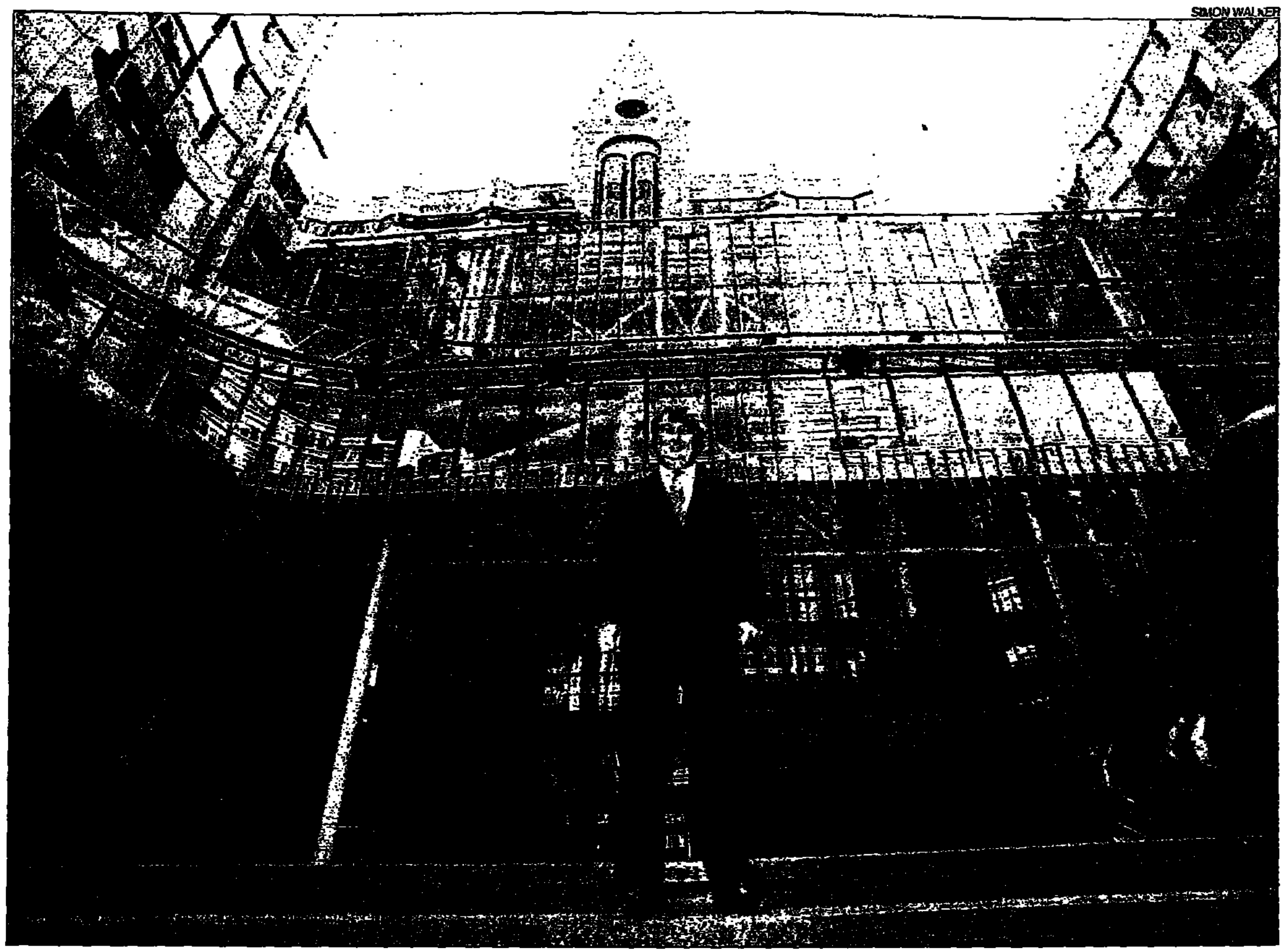

SIMON WALKER

Described as "impossibly demanding" and "a breath of fresh air", Michael Bright loves his job and remains ambitious for the business that he helped to create

IN THE notoriously stuffy world of insurance, Michael Bright is an unusual chief executive. Laddish, charismatic and, unlike many in his circle, without the advantage of a privileged background, the 52-year-old founder of Independent Insurance is as happy serving cocktails for big names in the industry as he is cheering Manchester United from his box at Old Trafford.

A working-class boy made good, Bright and ten other founders started Independent ten years ago with an investment of £150,000 between them, including £50,000 of Bright's own money. He has built the business from scratch into a hugely successful quoted company. It has bucked the trend in the insurance industry and made profits even during downward cycles in insurance rates.

With Bright's achievements have come the trappings of success — a London flat, a country home, a motor yacht, his beloved E-type Jaguar, holidays in the Bahamas, private education for his two children and a salary of £969,000 last year. The company was floated in November 1993 with a price tag of £98.5 million and an issue price of 225p per share. It is now worth £325 million and the shares are at 711½p.

Last month, the company shone in the troubled general insurance sector by unveiling 1996 profits up 21 per cent.

Bright does not play by normal rules. When the company floated, the perks in his three-year contract included a company profit scheme, a home entertainment allowance, phone bills at his home, and university fees and student accommodation paid for his two children. In 1995 his service contract was changed. Now any benefits are included in a taxable package. He is currently on a three-year rolling contract, but it does not contain a built-in "golden handshake" if he leaves the company.

"I am pleased with what I have achieved, but I like to think I've kept my feet on the ground," says Bright. "Anyway, my kids (aged 25 and 27) take the mickey out of me all the time, so I've no opportunity to become smug. One of the problems is you need to keep perspective. It would be all too easy to start believing your own PR."

Bright is an early riser. He is at the office by 7am every weekday, and leaves at 3.30pm to head home for a nap, followed by entertaining on four evenings. On Sundays, he does an hour's work before the rest of the family gets up. His home computer is linked to Independent's mainframe.

He has turned Independent into a tightly managed niche player, focusing on the UK market and dealing with only 20 per cent of brokers. It is now a successful fire, accident and motor insurance business, which specialises in unusual risks, including classic cars and high-risk drivers.

Bright has upset other insurers, talking outspokenly about falling motor rates at a time when the industry was trying to talk them up. He is also famous in the industry for having refused for two years to do business with Sedgwick, one of the biggest insurance brokers in the world, because he regarded its cash settlement as too slow. Asked about this he will only say: "It is not for me to comment."

Industry insiders admire the nerve of the man from nowhere who took on the big boys and won. They describe him variously as "a maverick", "impossibly demanding", "a breath of fresh air" and "a tremendous businessman", but all covet his lifestyle.

One says: "He leaves the office in the middle of the afternoon and takes the day's business home with him, so while the rest of his staff are working away at the office until 8pm, he's sipping a gin and tonic on his balcony and making more business phone calls."

Certainly, Independent, which is based at Minster Court in the City of London, has a reputation of paying among the best salaries and bonuses, but working its staff hard. "He has a reputation as infuriating to work for," one insider says of Bright. "He is very demanding and regarded by the rest of the industry as a bit of a maverick, but he's a shrewd businessman, and if he wasn't in insurance, he'd have made a success of some other enterprise." Bright has kept his shareholders happy. Independent's stock has trebled since 1995, and his own 5 per cent stake is now worth £15 million. He confirms that he is a tough boss, saying: "I get in early, look through the news on the Reuters screen, check through the previous day's business. By the time the rest of the staff get in, I know all about their recent performance. That creates a nice tension.

> ❛ Few people have the chance to start with a clean sheet of paper ❜

"I don't pretend to work 9 to 5. Having a flat near work has made a big difference to my life. I don't understand how other people can cope with the grind of commuting. I work flat out from 7am to 3.30pm and then I'm shattered. I go home and have an hour's sleep. That gives me a renewed burst of energy."

His evenings in London are spent entertaining brokers and clients, and observers believe that it is this personal contact that is the secret of his success. He also brings his senior staff to his home in Kent to endure weekends of "pleasure and pain". During these weekends his wife, Katie, cooks for them while he conducts an intense review of their business figures. Kent is also where Bright relaxes, where he likes to "slob around in casual clothes, potter in the vegetable garden, read, and drive my Jag".

His father was the director of a fuel distribution company. After leaving school at 16 with 5 O levels, Bright flirted briefly with a career in engineering, which he hated, before replying to a small advertisement in the local paper to work for Royal Insurance in Bromley. He was immediately accepted: "It's ironic that with those qualifications no one would even consider me for a job in insurance now," he says. "I doubled my money overnight. I was living in Bromley so I didn't have the cost of rail fares, and they were paying me £520 a year."

He studied for insurance qualifications and in the mid-Sixties left to join the National Coal Board, where aged 21 he met Katie, who was the same age. They married a year later. He then moved on to work for Orion Insurance.

The couple will celebrate their 30th wedding anniversary in July. "Katie and I moved every two-and-a-half years for ten years while my career developed," Bright recalls.

By that time, he had developed a taste for insurance. "Numbers fascinate me, and I love what I do," he says. "What other job can you be assessing risk at the Jubilee Line extension one day, and on a motor racing track the next? It's about real life." In 1982 he joined Lombard Elizabethan Insurance as director and general manager. Four years later, at 42, he had a call from Ian Noble, of Noble and Co, the Scottish banker, to set up an insurance company. The plan was to create a Scottish insurance operation to rival General Accident. Bright was headhunted to become chief executive. "I said I'd do it, but I wouldn't live in Scotland," he recalls. The challenge was that "very few people have the chance to start with a clean sheet of paper". He added that, as the founders put up a lot of their own money, their minds were suitably focused. Historically, insurance companies have high costs and huge volumes of paperwork. Independent was born in the computer age, and has software that can calculate the profit and loss account on a daily basis.

To establish the business, Bright travelled the country in a campaign bus serving tea and rolls to brokers throughout Britain to try to persuade them to place business with the new company. "At first they laughed at us," says Bright, "but then they saw that we were serious." It was in the beginning, and, he says, still is, "very hard work".

The company grew organically, until, in 1994, Bright pulled off a deal that industry observers describe as "a real coup". He bought the ongoing UK business of Aegon Insurance Group, a purchase that has brought Independent premium income even during difficult insurance cycles, and in 1995 expanded into France.

Bright plans "to do even more with the company in the next ten years", and it is here that analysts express their reservations. "His management style is fine for a small company, but I would have doubts about how successfully he could handle a large company," one analyst said. "He brings in business by personal contact and entertaining, but if the company gets too big, that won't be viable any more."

Bright, however, remains unperturbed by the doubts: "My style is hands-on, but so are the managers who work for me. I have 35 to 40 managers who eat the rest of the world for breakfast."

HIDDEN ASSETS

Company kicks off art events with a load of old rubbish

Joanna Pitman on a marketing consultancy that intends to stage exhibitions in its office

For the first art exhibition in its Battersea Bridge premises, Claydon Heeley International, a marketing consultancy, has chosen a young Japanese installation artist, Tomoko Takahashi, to spread rubbish all over the floor.

In the spirit of contemporary art appreciation, the company has opened up its work space to this deluge of cigarette butts, old sandwich packets, bits of discarded paper, worn out computers, a pair of jeans, empty packets of Aspirin, old Pepsi cans, crisp packets, old pizza boxes, probably old pizzas too, and assorted other oddities.

The idea is that the office, redesigned last year by England Innes Architects, is to host a new art exhibition every five or six weeks, around which employees must get on with their snappy advertising thoughts from Monday to Friday, and which becomes open to the public at weekends.

The first choice of artist in the series has caused something of a stir. Miss Takahashi arrived at Claydon Heeley in January to size up the venue. She was taken aback by the industry of the office — and the amount of rubbish produced. So to put across this astonishment, she decided to collect all the rubbish over a period of about six weeks and then, for the exhibition, to bring it back and spread it all over the floor.

She says: "I started collecting the pieces in January. I washed the dirty things and then I decided to scribble over all the words on the paper I had. So I scribbled over every word or letter in black pen. That took about two weeks. Then the actual installation. Well, that took about five days — four full days over Easter and then quite a few evenings too.

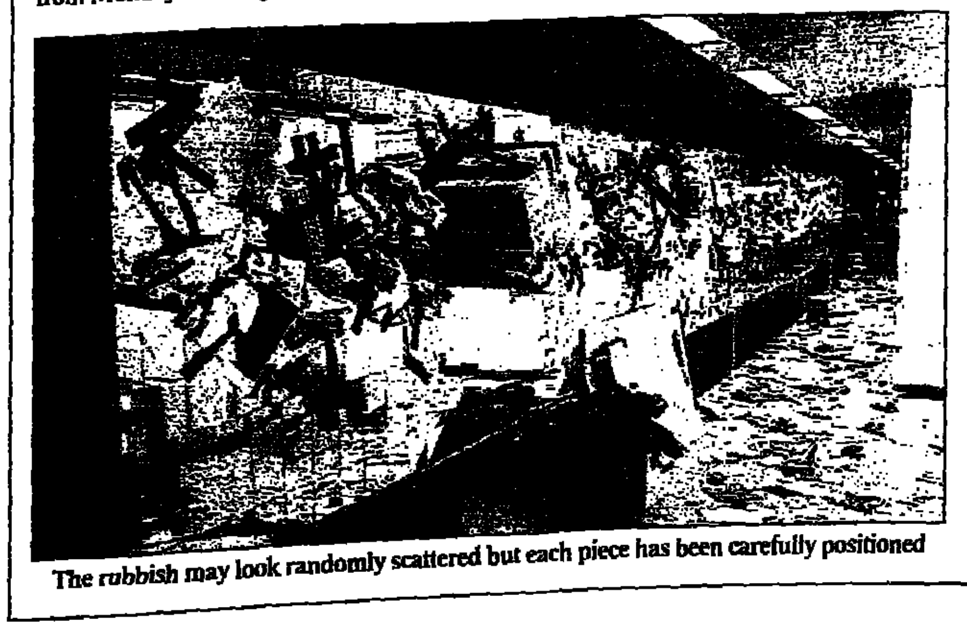
"I placed the rubbish on the floor — it might look just scattered any old how, but each piece is carefully placed in a particular position. I taped bits and pieces up on the walls. I taped over the TV screens and I scribbled over the brand labels. It was a lot of work, but I'm very pleased with the result."

And why does Claydon Heeley want to indulge, for five weeks, in gazing at its own rubbish? The grand scheme behind it, says Gillian Dunn, art consultant to the company, is that acquired artwork would become out of date too quickly in a fashionable, dynamic, young and progressive company such as this. So a series of art shows, staged fresh every five weeks, would always be at the cutting edge, would always inspire anew.

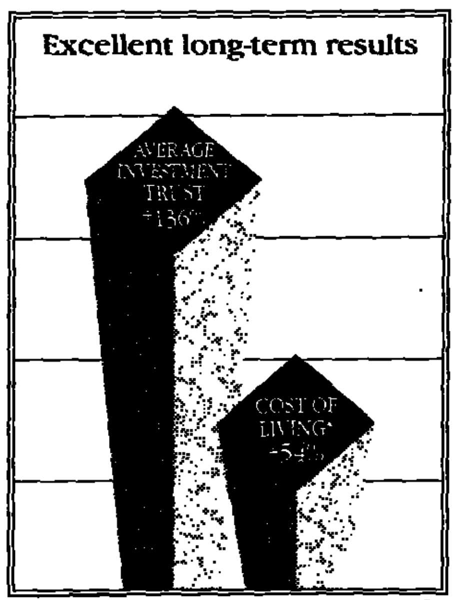
So far the rubbish seems to have inspired a certain amount of laughter and, as time goes by and the pizza boxes begin to smell, a fair amount of abuse. Miss Takahashi is unperturbed. "They make fun of me, yes. But they are not nasty. Some of them think it's quite funny. You don't take it seriously? But it is totally serious. Very serious. I wanted to describe just how people work here. What the place is like when it's alive and buzzing."

Of Miss Takahashi's previous shows since graduating from the Slade's MA course in 1996, perhaps the most unusual has been her molehill exhibition. This involved walking round a four-hectare field in Somerset and sticking a peg in the ground at every molehill she encountered. There were 600. She then tied all the markers together with string and spent the duration of her show running around after protruding moles, pushing her pegs back into the ground.

Being a foreigner, she believes, makes her line of work a little easier. "People can view me as foreign, so it doesn't really matter what I do. They can like it or not, it doesn't bother me. But for me it is very serious indeed. You see, in this case, in this office, I am commenting on the way people work here."



The rubbish may look randomly scattered but each piece has been carefully positioned



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GOVETT
Investment

STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Institutions bid up to 520p for Alliance shares

THE clamour by institutional investors for shares in the Alliance & Leicester ahead of Monday's stock market flotation looks likely to result in a bigger than expected windfall for the building society-turned-bank's members.

On offer were 52 million shares, or 9 per cent. As bidding got under way at 4.30pm in the first of the institutional auctions, fund managers were reported to be offering up to 520p a share — way above earlier estimates of between 502p and 505p. That would place the group on a price/earnings multiple of 12.5 and value the company at £3.05 billion.

More importantly, it will provide a windfall for the A&L members of £1,300. Brokers pointed out that the bids will have to be averaged out and the final figure may be somewhat lower, with another two auctions planned. But with the A&L likely to become a constituent of the top 100 companies almost immediately, institutional demand for the stock is expected to remain high.

Share prices generally traded in narrow limits for much of the session before responding to an opening rise by the Dow Jones industrial average. They closed at their best of the day in thin trading. The FT-SE 100 index closed 11.6 up at 4,310.5. Despite this week's continuing volatility on Wall Street, the FT-SE 100 rise on the week was 39.8.

Zeneca put in a late run, closing 48p higher at £18.34 as the old stories about a bid for the company were revived. It looks as though one market-maker is feeling the squeeze and may be having trouble in covering an open position. Turnover was on the low side at 1.44 million shares.

Standard Chartered jumped 27p to 892p amid claims that Cazenove, the broker, was recommending the shares.

Northern Ireland Electricity rose 11p to 391p as SBC Warburg, the broker, raised its target price for the shares from 380p to 400p. But the rest of the electricity companies ran into profit-taking. Several brokers have been pushing the sector of late for its defensive qualities and strong yields. **National Power** lost 5½p at 523½p and **Scottish Hydro** 9½p at 380p.

A warning that it will plunge into the red during the first six months left **Chemring** nursing a loss of 62½p at 122½p. The group said the pre-tax loss was unlikely to be no more than £2 million, against a profit last time of £4.5 million, with profits for the full year "considerably reduced". The dividend is also to be cut.

LucasVarity rounded off an eventful week steady at 192½p as a further 3.5 million shares changed hands. On Tuesday, the group's American management rattled British fund managers by cutting the dividend from 7p to 4.3p and proceeding with its share buy-back programme.

Probably the best performance of the week was recorded in **Optometrics**, the scientific instruments supplier, where the price more than doubled from 11p to 25½p. A consortium of private investors agreed to acquire 53 per cent of the company. It involved a share placing in 5.4 million shares at 16½p. Among the sellers was Frank Denton, chairman, who sold 2.4 million shares. Leading the buyers is thought to be Peter Levine, deputy chairman of Severfield Reeve.

There are changes afoot in the building sector. On Monday, **Camas** and **Bardon**, the quarrying companies, agreed to tie the knot in a deal worth £540 million. The new company will be called Aggregate Industries and will be Britain's fifth largest supplier. Camas ended ½p firmer at 96p, while Bardon was unmoved at 46½p.

News of the merger came as bad news for speculators who had bought into **Bruntcliffe Aggregates**, unchanged at 29½p, in the hope of a bid from Bardon. It already owns 22.7 per cent of Bruntcliffe.

JJB Sports ended the week on a high note, closing 10½p better at 462½p, stretching the gain on the week to 62½p. The sportswear retailer produced a 58 per cent rise in profits, prompting brokers to upgrade their forecasts for the current year from £24 million to between £27 million and £30 million. David Whelan, chairman, denied he was about to sell up.

John Coleman, the new chief executive at **House of Fraser**, was given a cautious reception by brokers on Thursday after the group plunged into the red. It announced losses of £38 million following exceptional write-offs totalling £53.2 million. Coleman was upbeat about prospects, but could not convince the City. He has vowed to resign if plans for the future fail. The shares ended unchanged yesterday at 165p.

Reporting yesterday, **Liberty**, the stores group, marked time at 370p after returning to the black and maintaining the dividend. The group, headed by David Cassidy, chairman, and Ian Thomson, managing director, last year closed all its provincial stores. It is redeveloping its flagship store in London's Regent Street.

Carlton Communications continued to make headway with a rise of 4p at 532½p, taking the shares' progress on the week to 28p. On Thursday, Morgan Stanley strongly recommended them.

☐ **GILT-EDGED:** Firmer than expected money supply numbers pulled the rug from under domestic bond prices. Losses stretched to £½ as they underperformed German bunds in thin trading. The Bank of England was able to supply tranches of this week's "tap" Treasury Index-Linked 2 per cent 2013.

Treasury 8 per cent 2015 finished £½ lower at £109¹³⁄₃₂ as a meagre 34,000 contracts were completed. Treasury 8 per cent 2015 fell £½ to £103⁵⁄₃₂, while Treasury 8 per cent 2000 was three ticks off at £102¾.

☐ **NEW YORK:** Shares extended their morning gains to continue the 300-point rally of the week. The high technology sector went against the trend and the bond market also soured. By midday the Dow Jones industrial average was 30.10 points higher at 6,688.70.

Denis Cassidy of Liberty, back in the black, is flanked by Ian Thomson, left, and Andrew Garety, finance director

Everything is coming up roses for William Sinclair, including its share price. It closed 9p up at 250p yesterday, against 185p earlier this year. The warm spring weather is good for the garden products supplier. Panmure Gordon, its broker, may raise its £6 million forecast, against last year's £5.2 million.

MOVERS OF THE WEEK

	Current price	Week's change	
On-Line	52½p	-12p	Profits warning
Camas	96p	+12p	Merging with Bardon
Chemring	122½p	-127½p	News of losses
Jarvis	248p	+29½p	Bumper profits expected
Optometrics	25p	+14p	Consortium bids for control
Watermark	34p	+6p	Profits doubled
Arlen	40p	-5½p	Margins under pressure
Dixons Motors	321p	+27p	Trading sharply better
JJB Sports	462½p	+62½p	Bumper profits news

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):	
Dow Jones	6688.70 (+30.10)
S&P Composite	764.72 (+2.95)
Tokyo:	
Nikkei Average	18352.14 (+258.73)
Hong Kong:	
Hang Seng	12541.18 (+24.95)
Amsterdam:	
EOE Index	741.79 (+2.16)
Sydney:	
AO	2442.4 (+29.2)
Frankfurt:	
DAX	3344.39 (-38.86)
Singapore:	
Straits	Closed
Brussels:	
General	12116.54 (+103.43)
Paris:	
CAC-40	2547.56 (-67.62)
Zurich:	
SKA Gen	980.90 (+3.70)
London:	
FT 30	2834.5 (+0.4)
FTSE 100	4310.5 (+11.6)
FTSE 250	4517.7 (-7.2)
FTSE 350	2121.5 (+3.8)
FTSE Eurotrack 100	2187.55 (-6.12)
FTSE All-Share	2092.44 (+3.34)
FTSE Non Financials	2150.68 (+0.62)
FTSE Fixed Interest	116.96 (-0.02)
FTSE Govt Secs	94.15 (+0.12)
Bargains	39567
SEAQ Volume	679.3m
US$	1.6310 (+0.0022)
German Mark	2.7991 (-0.0111)
Exchange Index	99.8 (-0.2)
Bank of England official close (4pm)	
£:ECU	1.4291
£:SDR	1.1908
RPI	155.4 Mar (2.6%) Jan 1987=100
RPIX	154.9 Mar (2.7%) Jan 1987=100

RECENT ISSUES

Aurora Inv Trust	100	...
Avalon Oil	86½	...
Avis Europe	133	...
Bickerton	38½	...
Charlton Athletic	56	+ 1
Close Bros Prot VCT	95	...
Donatantonio	74½	...
Harvey Nash	200	...
Heal's	212½	...
Methven's	48	...
NMT (50)	54½	+ 1
Newcastle Utd	123	- ½
Northstar Secs	28½	...
Oxford Tech Venture	95	...
Sibir Energy	15½	...
Torch Hldgs	107½	...
United Overseas Grp	61½	...
Worldsec	177	...

RIGHTS ISSUES

Blocure n/p (9)	22½	...
Edge Props n/p (135)	18½	+ 1
Luminar n/p (320)	52½	...

MAJOR CHANGES

RISES:

Photobition	545p (+24p)
Dolphin Pack	247½p (+10p)
Lincat	267½p (+10p)
DFS Furniture	520½p (+18p)
Stand Chart	892p (+27p)
Bank Scotland	325½p (+9p)
Lloyds TSB	532p (+12½p)
Scot & New	675p (+14½p)
MMT Comp	570p (+10p)
Guinness	513½p (+9p)
Argos	653½p (+11p)
Bk of Ireland	646p (+10p)
BTP	279p (+10p)

FALLS:

Beales Hunter	126p (-23p)
Racal Elect	243½p (-33½p)
Oriflame Intl	471p (-29p)
Shield Diag	562½p (-32½p)
Telspec	245p (-10p)
Leopold J	475p (-15p)
Stagecoach	596½ (-15p)
Boosey Hwks	802½p (-20p)
Morland	567½p (-10p)
Smithkline	904p (-15½p)
Utd Assurance	457½p (-9p)

Closing Prices Page 41

TEMPUS

Distress beacons light up

OH DEAR, Racal Electronics has tripped over its own feet again. This time the problem is in the data products arm, a familiar underachiever. At the last profits warning, all of four months ago, data products were a little beacon of hope and were on course to make a modest second-half profit. This promise started depreciating only a few weeks later, when Racal missed a product launch. Lost sales and the £5 million spent on fixing the software means data products will now make £7 million in the second half.

Racal portrays this as a great shame but no tragedy: the group's network services and defence electronic businesses are performing well. It will all come good soon — just you see. This breezy optimism is dismally familiar. Racal's upbeat view of the world can be seen in its explanation of the data product problems. It seems the "modest profits" forecast really meant break-even, and the additional software development spend doesn't really count, so Racal only missed its target by £2 million. The reality is, Racal was three months late launching products whose commercial life is often less than a year long. That is not good enough when it is up against fearsome American competition.

The latest collapse in the share price will set the familiar hares running. Sir Ernie Harrison is preparing to retire and/or break Racal up. Racal's share of the £2 billion Bowman military contract and the potential of its telecoms make it worth far more than last night's £700 million. Taking Racal at its word, the shares look good value at 243½p, but it could be a long haul while the company rebuilds City trust.

Chemring

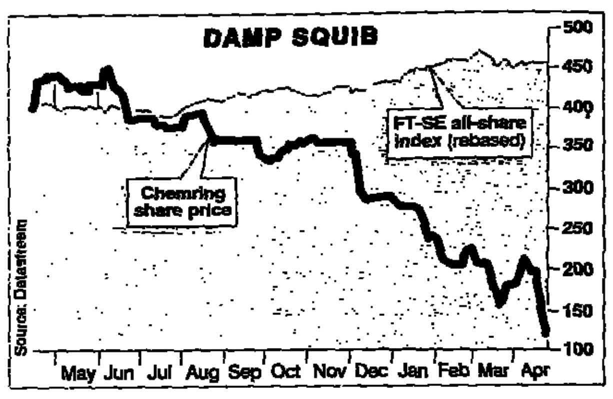
AFTER months of steadily gliding downwards, Chemring's shares have gone into a dive. Not even the prevailing scepticism had allowed for the dismal picture presented yesterday.

Long suspected by critics the admission finally came that the market for aircraft missile decoys has shrunk and is unlikely to recover to its former self.

Chemring is now swallowing its pride and embarking on a wholesale clear out, selling everything from its fireworks arm to its head office to raise cash to avoid buckling under the weight of its mounting debts.

Concentrating all the expensive horrors into six months will not be pleasant to watch: as a desperate seller, Chemring is unlikely to fetch good prices for any of the assets on the auction block. But admitting a crisis and downsizing to reflect the drop in demand is a better idea than carrying on under the delusion that the slump in decoy orders is merely a delay, with a boom around the corner.

However, fighter aircraft cannot function without decoys, and there are only three producers of such decoys in the world. If a leaner, more agile Chemring can stay afloat during the lulls, a smaller, leaner market will still be there for it. But it is too soon to mark the company down as a recovery stock. Much rests on the success of the disposals. Shareholders have suffered too much to jump out now.



Alliance

ITS NAME is instantly familiar. But even smarter investors may not know much about the Alliance & Leicester. Here are a few salient facts.

The A&L can trace its origins back to 1853. Its history since that time has been of successive mergers, culminating in the purchase of Girobank in 1990. The A&L is Britain's sixth-largest mortgage provider, with a market share of 4.1 per cent. But it has ambitions beyond home loans. After flotation, it intends to develop its commercial lending activities, using the Girobank brand. It will also enter the lucrative personal pensions market, untainted by the scandal that has hit many of the other names in this business.

So far, so good. But the picture is not all rosy. Take its cost ratio of 51 per cent. This compares unfavourably with the go-ahead Northern Rock, whose cost ratio is 33 per cent. The A&L has pledged to reduce this ratio. Observers believe that this can only be accomplished by job losses. Significantly, the A&L has made no job commitments.

It is also hard to see how A&L can expand, given the legislative bar on takeovers. A bid would be a gamble for A&L because it would be immediately exposed to a predator. But for shareholders, a bid would be the best ending of the A&L's 144-year story. Analysts believe that an aggressor would have to pay as much as 685p. A fair return for a £100 investment with the society.

Liberty

DRAGGING Liberty into the late 20th century was bound to be a difficult task. While the group clearly needed to be thoroughly modernised, it could not afford to lose its old-fashioned and exotic charm.

The latest figures suggest that the strategy adopted by the new management team is working. Sales growth has moved into double figures.

There is also promising news on the heritage front. Liberty is putting its archives on CD-Rom, which should ensure that the designs which are at the heart of the group are preserved and may be recycled.

Efforts to leverage the brand have shifted abroad. The provincial shops have gone, while the airport shop chain is to be expanded overseas and a new branch opened in downtown Tokyo. Although earlier Liberty forays abroad ended badly, a cautious approach should bring rewards.

The company is still 44 per cent family owned, while 17 per cent is held by Bryan Myerson's UK Active Value fund. There is so little liquidity that only the house broker follows the stock. Scarcity has helped the shares to achieve a heady rating, but holders have not seen the best yet.

COMMODITIES

LIFFE

COCOA

May	1020-1019	Jul	1052-1050
Jul	1034-1033	Sep	1065-1060
Sep	1046-1045	Dec	1074-1070
Dec	1020-1018	Mar	1090-1080
Mar	1031-1030		
May	*1041-1040*		*Volume: 2041*

ROBUSTA COFFEE ($)

May	1645-1638	Jan	1650-1635
Jul	*1663-1660*	*Mar*	*1625-1610*
Sep	1670-1667	May	1625-1600
Nov	1663-1657		Volume: 4675

WHITE SUGAR (FOB)

Reuters		Mar	300.4-98.5
Spot: 310.2		May	302.4-99.9
Aug	308.1-07.6	Aug	298.6-96.9
Oct	304.0-03.5	Oct	unq
Dec	*301.3-99.5*		*Volume: 1051*

MEAT & LIVESTOCK COMMISSION

Average fatstock prices at representative markets on April 17

(p/kg lw)	Pig	Sheep	Cattle
GB:	89.05	129.07	92.69
(+/-)	+5.13	-0.81	-4.65
Eng/Wales:	89.13	132.08	91.59
(+/-)	+5.18	+1.26	-5.28
(%)	+2.0	-17.0	-30.0
Scotland:	79.32	116.03	95.96
(+/-)	-0.69	-8.89	-2.14
(%)	+10.0	+3.0	-25.0

ICIS-LOR (London 6.00pm)

CRUDE OILS ($/barrel FOB)

Brent Physical	17.25	+0.25
Brent 15 day (Jun)	17.95	+0.10
Brent 15 day (Jul)	18.10	+0.10
W Texas Intermediate (Jun)	19.55	+0.15
W Texas Intermediate (Jul)	19.60	+0.15

PRODUCTS ($/MT)

Spot CIF NW Europe (prompt delivery)

	Bid	Offer
Premium Unld	196 (n/c)	198 (n/c)
Gasoil EEC	169 (+2)	170 (+1)
3.5 Fuel Oil	78 (n/c)	80 (n/c)
Naphtha	175 (-5)	178 (-4)

IPE FUTURES (GNI Ltd)

GAS OIL

May	163.25-63.50	Aug	167.50-67.75
Jun	164.25-64.50	Sep	169.75-70.00
Jul	165.75-66.00		Vol: 13041

BRENT (6.00pm)

Jun	17.93-17.95	Sep	unq
Jul	*18.06-18.07*	*Oct*	18.39 SLR
Aug	18.25 SLR		Vol. 21377

GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES

LIFFE WHEAT (close £/t)		LIFFE BARLEY (close £/t)	
May	98.50	May	91.75
Jul	101.50	Sep	94.00
Sep	97.25	Nov	96.00
Nov	99.25	Jan	98.00
Jan	101.25	Mar	100.00
Volume: 545		Volume: 15	

LIFFE POTATO (£/t)	Open	Close
May	35.0	32.0
Jun	unq	55.0
Nov	—	71.0
		Volume: 60

RUBBER (No 1 RSS Cif p/k)

May 72.75-73.25

LIFFE BIFFEX (GNI Ltd $10/pt)

	High	Low	Close
Apr 97	1340	1330	1330
May 97	1355	1340	1345
Jun 97	—	—	1245
Jul 97	1190	1170	1170
Vol: 106 lots		Open Interest: 2949	

Index 1345 -16

LONDON METAL EXCHANGE

(Official) (Volume prev day)	Cash	3mth	Rudolf Wolff Vol
Copper Gde A ($/tonne)	2332.0-2334.0	2289.0-2290.0	854625
Lead ($/tonne)	629.00-630.00	636.00-637.00	225075
Zinc Spec Hi Gde ($/tonne)	1223.0-1224.0	1245.5-1246.0	464225
Tin ($/tonne)	5690.0-5700.0	5735.0-5745.0	14620
Aluminium Hi Gde ($/tonne)	1524.5-1525.0	1557.5-1558.0	1722000
Nickel ($/tonne)	7255.0-7260.0	7370.0-7375.0	59706

LIFFE OPTIONS

Series		Calls Jul	Oct	Jan	Puts Jul	Oct	Jan
Alld Dom	420	21	30	36	18	23	33
(*427)	460	7	14	20	45	49	59
ASDA	110	7	9	11	4	7	8
(*111)	120	3	5	7	10	13	14
Boots	650	59	66	72	9	15	20
(*697)	700	25	35	44	30	36	42
Br Airways	650	46	60	70	16	22	29
(*681)	700	20	35	45	42	49	54
BP	650	50	61	70	12	22	29
(*683)	700	23	36	45	35	46	52
Br Steel	140	13	13	15	6	5	11
(*148)	160	4	5	7	20	21	24
C & W	460	37	47	56	15	21	28
(*461)	500	18	26	37	37	42	48
CU	600	66	81	95	18	33	40
(*642)	650	38	56	69	37	55	62
ICI	650	63	72	82	6	15	20
(*697)	700	30	41	53	22	36	41
Land Sec	750	44	52	60	15	23	27
(*781)	800	19	20	35	44	50	54
M & S	460	41	48	55	9	11	15
(*494)	500	15	26	33	26	29	33
Nat West	650	54	62	75	15	30	33
(*678)	700	26	37	50	38	55	60
Safeway plc	330	23	29	35	13	16	21
(*344)	360	9	16	22	31	33	37
Sainsbury	300	30	35	38	6	8	11
(*327)	330	11	18	22	19	22	25
Shell	1000	77	98	109	13	29	36
(*1048)	1050	40	67	81	31	50	57
SmKl Bch	900	46	69	95	35	40	61
(*904)	950	25	47	62	64	77	85
Storehse	300	—	—	—	—	—	—
(unq)	330	—	—	—	—	—	—
Trafalgar	50	—	—	—	—	—	—
(unq)	60	—	—	—	—	—	—
Zeneca	1800	105	145	183	61	89	101
(*1817)	1900	61	97	134	115	142	152
Series		**Jul**	**Oct**	**Jan**	**Jul**	**Oct**	**Jan**
BAT Ind	500	51	60	71	16	29	35
(*527)	550	25	36	47	40	55	61
Vodafone	280	19	27	32	11	16	19
(*290)	290	10	18	23	22	27	30
Series		**May**	**Aug**	**Nov**	**May**	**Aug**	**Nov**
Grnd Met	460	42	52	59	5	7	11
(*499)	500	12	26	35	11	22	27
Ladbroke	220	17	24	28	2	5	8
(*235)	240	5	13	17	9	13	17
Utd Bisc	220	12	20	24	4	8	13
(*227)	240	2	10	14	14	19	23

Series		Calls Jul	Oct	Jan	Puts Jul	Oct	Jan
BAA	500	43	50	58	9	13	18
(*531)	550	14	24	33	33	37	42
Thames W.	650	44	51	56	32	38	44
(*670)	700	20	29	35	62	66	73
Series		**May**	**Aug**	**Nov**	**May**	**Aug**	**Nov**
BTR	240	14	23	26	3	7	10
(*251)	260	4	12	16	12	16	20
Br Aero	1300	69	109	132	12	31	45
(*1349)	1350	39	80	106	31	52	67
Br Telcm	420	30	40	43	2	15	19
(*445)	460	7	18	21	18	38	40
Cadbury	500	26	42	48	6	19	19
(*518)	550	4	17	25	37	41	45
Guinness	500	21	36	46	7	14	18
(*513)	550	3	13	22	37	42	45
GEC	360	16	25	30	4	16	19
(*370)	390	3	11	16	21	34	36
Hanson	300	12	23	27	7	15	20
(*302)	330	2	10	15	28	32	37
LASMO	220	12	19	25	6	11	13
(*225)	240	4	11	16	18	22	23
LucasVarity	180	15	19	23	2	6	9
(*193)	200	4	9	14	10	15	19
Pilkngtn	110	10	13	—	1	5	—
(*118)	120	4	8	—	5	10	—
Prudential	550	30	47	58	8	17	26
(*570)	600	6	23	34	35	43	51
Redland	330	15	22	31	12	20	25
(*339)	360	3	10	19	34	39	43
R-Royce	240	11	20	26	6	12	15
(*249)	260	3	11	16	19	23	29
Tesco	360	11	23	29	9	16	30
(*360)	390	2	10	16	30	34	38
Williams	330	—	—	—	—	—	—
(unq)	360	—	—	—	—	—	—

FTSE INDEX (*4306)

	4200	4250	4300	4350	4400	4450
Calls						
Apr	95	45	0	0	0	0
May	140	102	70	45	30	13
Jun	179	144	113	87	68	47
Jul	215	178	146	116	92	72
Dec	312	—	240	—	197	—
Puts						
Apr	0	0	5	56	105	155
May	31	44	63	89	122	160
Jun	64	91	101	125	153	185
Jul	85	99	119	142	166	197
Dec	145	—	181	—	224	—

Series		Calls Jul	Oct	Jan	Puts Jul	Oct	Jan
Abby Nat	750	71	86	97	15	27	32
(*795)	800	40	57	72	35	49	56
Amstrad	140	—	—	—	—	—	—
(unq)	160	—	—	—	—	—	—
Barclays	1000	56	75	93	34	53	67
(*1007)	1050	35	52	69	61	80	87
Natl Pwr	500	42	44	49	25	28	33
(*520)	550	17	20	29	54	57	61
Series		**Jul**	**Oct**	**Jan**	**Jul**	**Oct**	**Jan**
Glaxo W	1100	76	92	116	30	44	54
(*1136)	1150	45	64	91	49	67	77
HSBC	1500	104	132	167	46	73	88
(*1537)	1600	56	85	117	99	124	139
Reuter	550	55	65	79	14	18	25
(*583)	600	26	38	52	34	41	48
Royal & Sun	420	37	47	55	10	17	22
(*441)	460	16	26	32	29	37	41
Series		**May**	**Aug**	**Nov**	**May**	**Aug**	**Nov**
Blue Circ	390	29	42	48	3	9	15
(*415)	420	10	24	31	13	21	28
Series		**May**	**Aug**	**Nov**	**May**	**Aug**	**Nov**
Kingfishr	650	32	53	62	7	18	26
(*672)	700	8	27	37	33	43	50
Series		**Jun**			**Jun**		
Br Gas	240	10	—	—	13	—	—
(*249)	260	3	—	—	28	—	—
Series		**Jun**	**Sep**	**Dec**	**Jun**	**Sep**	**Dec**
Dixons	500	28	39	50	16	28	33
(*506)	550	9	17	28	45	57	61
EMI Group	1150	77	104	117	21	45	56
(*1192)	1200	48	75	90	42	67	74
Tarmac	110	10	14	15	2	5	8
(*117)	120	5	9	10	7	10	13
Hillsdwn	180	23	14	—	4	6	—
(*192)	200	2	4	—	15	19	—
Lonrho	130	20	14	17	3	6	7
(*135)	140	5	9	12	8	11	13
Sears	90	—	—	—	—	—	—
(unq)	100	—	—	—	—	—	—
Thorn EMI	1500	—	—	—	—	—	—
(unq)	1600	—	—	—	—	—	—
Tomkins	260	15	21	24	6	14	16
(*268)	280	6	11	15	17	25	27
Lloyds TSB	500	42	54	66	8	16	23
(*532)	550	15	27	40	30	40	47
Scot Pwr	360	25	33	36	10	17	20
(*375)	390	9	18	21	24	33	36
Unilever	1500	103	136	159	9	22	32
(*1576)	1600	37	74	97	45	60	71

April 18, 1997 Tot: 94234 Call: 34815 Put: 59419 *FTSE* Call: 10957 Put: 5775
*Underlying security price.

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol
Long Gilt	Jun 97	110-01	110-03	109-22	109-24	34724
Previous open interest: 170709	Sep 97				109-19	0
German Govt Bond (Bund)	Jun 97	100.88	101.00	100.69	100.82	134426
Previous open interest: 266864	*Sep 97*				*99.81*	*0*
Italian Govt Bond (BTP)	*Jun 97*	*128.08*	*128.26*	*127.60*	*127.76*	*60608*
Previous open interest: 110454	Sep 97	128.00	128.28	128.00	127.84	385
Japanese Govt Bond (JGB)	Jun 97	126.85	126.86	126.80	126.82	971
	Sep 97	125.59	125.61	125.59	125.57	95
Three Mth Sterling	*Jun 97*	*93.45*	*93.45*	*93.41*	*93.42*	*12059*
	Sep 97	93.19	93.19	93.13	93.14	11961
Previous open interest: 464830	Dec 97	92.96	92.97	92.91	92.92	10420
Three Mth Euromark	Jun 97	96.77	96.77	96.74	96.75	25473
Previous open interest: 1318380	Sep 97	96.70	96.71	96.68	96.70	23727
Three Mth Eurolira	Jun 97	93.19	93.19	93.06	93.12	27479
Previous open interest: 276557	Sep 97	93.45	93.45	93.36	93.39	3095
Three Mth Euroyen	Sep 97				99.24	0
	Dec 97				99.06	0
Three Mth Euroswiss	Jun 97	98.01	98.06	97.99	98.03	11430
Previous open interest: 115446	Sep 97	97.96	98.00	97.94	97.95	4231
Three Mth ECU	Jun 97	95.79	95.81	95.76	95.76	1365
Previous open interest: 30888	Sep 97	95.76	95.79	95.74	95.75	488
FTSE 100	Jun 97	4300.0	4327.0	4300.0	4315.0	10032
Previous open interest: 63335	Sep 97				4341.0	0

MONEY RATES (%)

Base Rates: Clearing Banks 6 Finance Hse 6½

Discount Market Loans: O/night high: 6 Low: 5½ Week fixed: 5½

Treasury Bills (Dis): Buy: 2 mth 6⅛; 3 mth 6⅛. Sell: 2 mth 5⅞; 3 mth 5⅞.

	1 mth	2 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
Prime Bank Bills (Dis):	6⅛-6	6⅛-6⅛	6¼-6⅛	6½-6⅜	
Sterling Money Rates:	6⅛-6⅛	6⅛-6⅛	6¼-6⅛	6½-6⅜	6⅞-6¾
Interbank:	6⅛-6	6⅛-6⅛	6¼-6⅛	6½-6⅜	6⅞-6¾
Overnight: open 5¾, close 5¾.					
Local Authority Deps:	6	n/a	6¼	6½	6¾
Sterling CDs:	6⅛-6	6⅛-6⅛	6¼-6⅛	6½-6⅜	6⅞-6¾
Dollar CDs:	5.55	n/a	5.71	5.91	6.24
Building Society CDs:	6⅛-6⅛	6⅛-6⅛	6¼-6⅛	6½-6⅜	6⅞-6¾

TREASURY BILLS: Applcts: £1,017m allotted: £200m, Bids: £98.49% received: 87%. Last week: £98.48% received: 53%; Avge rate: £6.0529% last wk £6.0853%: Next week £200m.

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)

Currency	*7 day*	*1 mth*	*3 mth*	*6 mth*	Call
Dollar:	5⅝-5½	5⅝-5½	5¾-5⅝	6-5⅞	5½-4½
Deutschemark:	3⅛-3	3⅛-3	3¼-3⅛	3⅜-3¼	3¼-2½
French Franc:	3⅛-3	3⅛-3	3¼-3⅛	3⅜-3¼	3¼-2½
Swiss Franc:	1½-1¼	1⅝-1½	1⅝-1½	1¾-1⅝	2½-1½
Yen:	⅝-½	⅝-½	⅝-½	¾-⅝	1-par

GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co)

Bullion: Open $342.00-342.30 Close: $342.20-342.70 High: $342.45-342.95
Low: $341.05-341.55 AM: $342.00 PM: $342.10

Krugerrand: $341.00-344.00 (£209.00-211.00)

Platinum: $377.00 (£230.95) **Silver:** $4.76 (£2.915) **Palladium:** $150.50 (£92.20)

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Mkt Rates for April 18	Range	Close	1 month	3 month
Amsterdam	3.1458-3.1529	3.1458-3.1486	⅛-¼pr	2½-2¼pr
Brussels	57.697-57.900	57.697-57.798	17-12pr	49-42pr
Copenhagen	10.663-10.692	10.663-10.673	⅛-¼pr	⅛-⅛pr
Dublin	1.0519-1.0563	1.0525-1.0545	7-3pr	23-17pr
Frankfurt	2.7980-2.8042	2.7980-2.8013	⅛-¼pr	2½-2¼pr
Lisbon	281.42-282.76	281.42-281.76	16pr-par	⅛-⅛pr
Madrid	235.81-236.81	235.81-236.12	13-2pr	51-32pr
Milan	2763.3-2773.9	2763.3-2766.7	13-29ds	33-55ds
Montreal	2.2799-2.2890	2.2799-2.2824	0.58-0.53pr	1.17-1.08pr
New York	1.6308-1.6322	1.6308-1.6318	0.725-0.525pr	0.223-0.192pr
Oslo	11.539-11.604	11.548-11.581	⅛-¼pr	⅛-⅛pr
Paris	9.4252-9.4550	9.4236-9.4252	2½-2pr	7-6½pr
Stockholm	12.499-12.585	12.506-12.526	⅛-¼pr	⅛-⅛pr
Tokyo	205.30-205.71	205.39-205.60	⅛-¼pr	3-2½pr
Vienna	19.961-19.745	19.961-19.715	⅛-¼pr	1½-1¼pr
Zurich	2.3799-2.3876	2.3810-2.3841	⅛-¼pr	2½-2¼pr

Source: Extel *Premium - pr. Discount - ds.*

DOLLAR RATES

Australia	1.2919-1.2928
Austria	12.07-12.08
Belgium (Com)	35.38-35.42
Canada	1.3998-1.4003
Denmark	6.5365-6.5385
France	5.7807-5.7817
Germany	1.7161-1.7166
Hong Kong	7.7487-7.7497
Ireland	1.5482-1.5502
Italy	1696.70-1697.70
Japan	125.80-125.90
Malaysia	2.5120-2.5130
Netherlands	1.9287-1.9292
Norway	7.0742-7.0815
Portugal	172.61-172.71
Singapore	1.4402-1.4412
Spain	144.90-144.93
Sweden	7.6478-7.6553
Switzerland	1.4596-1.4606

OTHER STERLING

Argentina peso*	1.6351-1.6342
Australia dollar	2.1082-2.1104
Bahrain dinar	0.6080-0.6210
Brazil real*	1.7272-1.7316
China yuan	13.372-13.672
Cyprus pound	0.8355-0.8455
Finland markka	8.4175-8.5235
Greece drachma	438.25-445.25
Hong Kong dollar	12.6417-12.6518
India rupee	57.88-58.84
Indonesia rupiah	3901.0-3960.6
Kuwait dinar KD	0.4890-0.4990
Malaysia ringgit	4.0983-4.1027
New Zealand dollar	2.3591-2.3622
Pakistan rupee	64.90 Buy
Saudi Arabia riyal	5.8775-6.0015
Singapore dollar	2.3509-2.3540
S Africa rand (com)	7.2233-7.3220
U A E dirham	5.9300-6.0540

Barclays Bank GTS * Lloyds Bank

FTSE VOLUMES

3i	214	Land Secs	366
ASDA Gp	13,800	Legal & Gn	1,300
Abbey Ntl	4,800	Lloyds TSB	9,300
Allied Dom	1,500	LucasVarity	6,300
AB Foods	983	Marks Spr	4,100
BAA	1,800	Mercury Asset	171
BAT Inds	5,600	NatWst Bk	5,100
BG	22,100	Nat Grid	2,900
BOC	409	*Nat Power*	2,000
BP	5,200	Next	1,600
BSkyB	2,900	Orange	3,100
BTR	6,200	P & O	1,500
BT	20,000	Pearson	530
Bk of Scot	1,300	PowerGen	412
Barclays	8,000	Prudential	2,200
Bass	1,900	RMC	2,400
Blue Circle	1,500	RTZ	1,800
Boots	1,700	Railtrack	1,200
BAe	736	Rank Group	836
BA	1,800	*Reckitt Col*	706
British Land	501	Reed Intl	4,700
Brit Steel	13,300	Rentokil	1,400
Burmah Cstl	141	Reuters	3,100
Burton	1,800	Rolls Royce	13,200
Cable Wire	2,300	Royal & Sun	1,300
Cadbury	3,700	Royal Bk Sct	1,200
Carlton Cms	1,900	Safeway	7,200
Centrica	12,700	Sainsbury	2,700
Cm Union	1,500	Schroders	18
Dixons	1,200	Scot & New	1,200
EMI	724	Scot Power	4,000
Energy Gp	1,600	Svrn Trent	1,400
Enterpr Oil	710	Shell Trans	5,400
GKN	395	Siebe	2,800
GRE	1,200	SmKl Bch	2,700
GUS	401	Smith Nph	2,700
Gen Acc	645	Smiths Inds	2,600
Gen Elec	1,800	Std Chartd	1,700
Glaxo Well	3,800	TI Gp	554
Granada	2,100	Tate & Lyle	262
Grand Met	1,400	Tesco	3,200
Guinness	4,300	Thames W	335
HSBC	1,300	Tomkins	6,000
Hanson	3,000	Unilever	404
Hays	2,400	Utd Utilities	1,900
ICI	653	Utd News	1,500
Imp Tob	6,200	Vodafone	11,600
Kingfisher	4,400	Whitbread	266
LASMO	687	Wolseley	434
Ladbroke	2,600	Zeneca	1,500

WALL STREET

	Apr 18 midday	Apr 17 close
AMP Inc	35	35
AMR Corp	97	97
AT & T	35	33
Abbott Labs	55	58
Advanced Micro	37	38
Aetna Life	86	87
Ahmanson (HF)	36	36
Air Prod & Chem	69	69
AirTouch Comm	24	23
Alberto-Culver B	27	27
Albertson's	32	32
Alcan Alumnm	32	32
Allied Signal	70	70
Alum Co of Am	68	69
Amerada Hess	48	49
Amer Brands	52	52
Amer El Power	40	40
Amer Express	60	60
Amer Genl Corp	38	38
Amer Home Pr	61	61
Amer Intl	119	118
Amer Stores	44	44
Amer Standard	46	46
Ameritech	59	59
Amoco	80	80
Andrew Corp	25	23
Anheuser-Busch	43	43
Apple Computer	19	19
Archer Daniels	17	17
Armco	4	4
Armstrong Wrld	62	62
Asarco	27	27
Atl Richfield	130	129
Auto Data Pro	43	42
Avery Dennison	37	37
Avon Products	58	57
Baker Hughes	35	35
Baltim Gas & El	25	25
Banc One	41	41
BankAmerica	107	108
Bank of NY	36	35
Bankers Tr NY	76	75
Barnett Banks	46	47
Bausch & Lomb	38	38
Baxter Intl	45	45
Becton Dickinsn	45	44
Bell Atlantic	60	60
Bell Industries	16	16
BellSouth	41	40
Black & Decker	31	30
Block (H&R)	32	31
Boeing	100	99
Boise Cascade	31	31
Bristol Myrs Sq	60	61
Browning Ferris	28	27
Brunswick	27	27
Burlington Nthn	72	72
CMS Energy Corp	31	32
CNA Financial	101	101
CPC Intl	81	79
CSX	47	46
Campbell Soup	47	46
Can Pacific	23	23
Carolina Pwr	35	34
Case Corp	53	51
Caterpillar	85	85
Central & SW	18	18
Champion Intl	46	45
Chase Manhat	90	89
Chevron Corp	64	63
Chrysler	30	31
Chubb Corp	53	53
Cigna Corp	144	146
Citicorp	105	105
Clorox	116	116
Coastal Corp	44	43
Coca Cola	61	59
Coca Cola Ent	56	58
Colgate-Palm	105	105
Columbia Gas	57	57
ColumbiaHCA	36	35
Compaq Comp	75	75
Comp Ass Intl	43	43
Conagra	56	56
Conrail	113	113
Cons Edison	28	28
Cons Nat Gas	47	46
Cooper Inds	43	43
Corestates	51	50
Corning Inc	40	40
Crown Cork	54	54
Dana Corp	31	31
Dayton Hudson	42	42
Deere	44	44
Delta Air Lines	94	92
Deluxe Corp	31	31
Digital Equip	27	27
Dillard Dept St	31	31
Disney (Walt)	75	75
Dominion Res	35	34
Donnelley (RR)	35	35
Dover Corp	54	54
Dow Chemical	80	79
Dow Jones	39	38
Dresser	28	28
Duke Power	43	43
Dun & Bradstreet	25	25
Du Pont	104	105
Eastman Chem	51	52
Eastman Kodak	79	79

	Apr 18 midday	Apr 17 close
Eaton Corp	71	71
Edison Intl	21	21
Elec Data Sys	39	38
Emerson Elec	47	47
Engelhard Corp	20	20
Enron Corp	37	37
Entergy	23	23
Ethyl Corp	9	8
Exxon	52	51
FMC Corp	63	61
FPL Group	43	43
Federal Express	53	53
First Bk Sys	72	72
First Union Rlty	14	13
Fleet Finl Grp	58	58
Fluor Corp	52	53
Ford Motor	34	34
GTE Corp	44	44
Gannett	85	85
Gap Inc Del	32	31
Gencorp	19	18
Gen Dynamics	67	67
Gen Electric	103	103
Gen Mills	59	59
Gen Motors	55	56
Gen Reinsurance	161	160
Gen Signal	37	37
Genuine Parts	31	31
Georgia Pac	76	75
Gillette	76	78
Glaxo Welle ADR	37	36
Goodrich (BF)	37	37
Goodyear Tire	52	52
Grt Atl Pac Tea	23	23
Great West Fin	40	40
Halliburton	67	67
Harcourt General	45	45
Heinz (HJ)	41	41
Hercules	40	39
Hershey Foods	52	51
Hewlett Packard	50	50
Hilton Hotels	25	25
Home Depot	57	56
Homestake Mng	13	13
Honeywell	69	70
Household Intl	87	85
Houston Inds	19	19
Humana	21	21
ITT Corp	59	58
Ikon Office	23	23
Illinois Tool	85	87
Illinova	21	21
INCO	31	31
Ingersoll Rand	40	40
Inland Steel	20	20
Intel Corp	139	138
IBM	136	137
Intl Flav & Fr	41	41
Intl Paper	42	42
James River Va	29	29
Jhnsn & Jhnsn	55	55
Kellogg	66	66
Kerr McGee	58	57
Kimberly-Clark	49	49
Kmart	12	12
Knight-Ridder	35	37
Lilly (Eli)	85	85
Limited Inc	17	18
Lincoln Nat	52	52
Litton	40	40
Liz Claiborne	47	47
Lockheed Martin	84	83
Louisiana Pac	17	17
MCI Comm	38	37
Manpower Inc	37	37
Marriott Int	52	52
Marsh & McLnn	116	115
Masco Corp	36	36
May Dept St	45	45
Maytag Corp	22	21
McDonalds	50	49
McDonnell D	60	59
McGraw Hill	51	51
Mead Corp	55	54
Medtronic	64	63
Mellon Bk	77	76
Merck Inc	85	86
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Microsoft	103	98
Minnesota Mine	85	82
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Monsanto	39	39
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Natl Semi	28	28
Natl Service Ind	41	41
Navistar Int	9	9
NY Times A	42	42
Newmont Mng	39	39
Niag Mohawk	9	9
Nike B	51	54
NL Industries	11	11
Noram Energy	14	14
Northern	37	37
Norfolk Sthrn	89	89
Nthn State Pwr	46	45
Norwest Corp	47	47
Nynex Corp	44	44
Occidental Pet	22	22
Ohio Edison	20	19

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Oracle	37	37
Oryx Energy Co	17	17
Owens Corning	38	38
PHH Corp	44	44
PPG Industries	52	51
PNC Bank	30	30
PP&L Res	19	19
Paccar Inc	72	73
Pacificorp	19	19
Pac Enterprises	30	30
Pall Corp	22	23
Parker Hannifin	47	47
Peco Energy	19	19
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Pennzoil	46	46
PepsiCo	33	33
Pfizer	88	88
Pharm & Upjhn	36	35
Phelps Dodge	74	75
Philip Morris	43	41
Phillips Pet	38	37
Pitney Bowes	57	57
Polaroid	41	41
Procter & Gmbl	120	121
Providian	55	55
Pub Serv E & G	24	24
Quaker Oats	39	38
Ralston Purina	79	79
Raychem Corp	68	86
Raytheon	43	43
Reebok Intl	45	45
Reynolds Metals	67	67
Rockwell Intl	64	63
Rohm & Haas	78	78
Royal Dutch	174	173
Rubbermaid	24	24
SBC Comms	51	51
Safeco Corp	39	39
St Paul's Cos	66	66
Salomon Inc	52	51
Sara Lee Corp	40	40
Schering Plough	75	75
Schlumberger	106	105
Seagram	37	37
Sears Roebuck	49	49
Shell Trans	102	101
Sherwin Wllms	27	27
Skyline Corp	21	21
Snap-On Tools	38	38
Southern Co	21	21
Sprint Corp	44	43
Stanley Works	37	37
Sun Company	24	24
Sun Microsys	28	27
Suntrust	47	47
Supervalu	29	29
Sysco Corp	34	34
TRW Inc	49	49
TCC Inds	1	1
TIG Hldgs	31	31
Tandem Comp	12	12
Tandy Corp	50	50
Temple Inland	53	52
Tenneco	40	40
Texaco	103	102
Texas Inst	83	84
Texas Utilities	32	32
Textron	105	104
Time Warner	44	44
Times Mirror A	54	55
Timken	54	54
Torchmark	57	54
Toys R Us	27	27
Transamerica	85	85
Travelers	50	50
Tribune	41	41
Tyco Int	59	59
UST Inc	27	26
UAL	74	74
US Inds	35	35
US West Comm	32	32
US West Media	17	17
USAirways Group	27	27
USX Marathon	26	26
Unicom	19	19
Unilever NV	187	185
Union Camp	47	46
Union Carbide	47	47
Union Pacific	59	59
Unisys Corp	5	5
USF&G Corp	19	20
US Life	46	46
United Tech	77	77
Unocal Corp	36	36
VF Corp	69	69
WMX Tech	31	31
Wal-Mart Stores	29	27
Warner-Lambert	87	86
Wells Fargo	254	255
Westinghouse El	17	17
Weyerhaeuser	45	44
Whirlpool	47	47
Whitman	23	23
Winn Dixie	33	33
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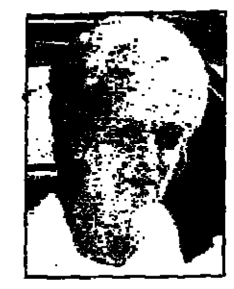
PROTÉGÉS 31
What it takes to become a wunderkind

WEEKEND MONEY

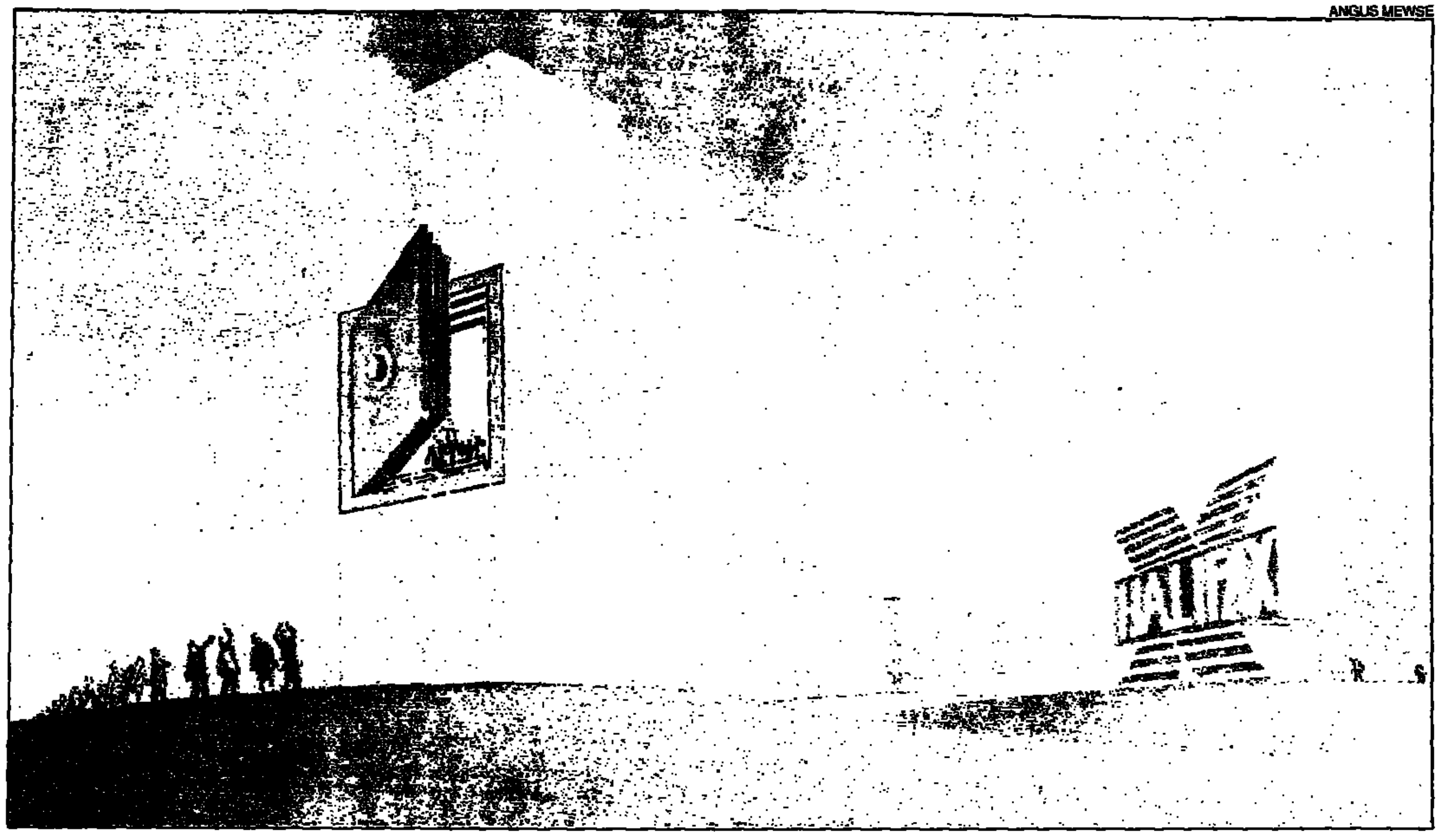
INSURANCE 37
Who pays for an accident at work?



THE TIMES: PERSONAL FINANCE NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

Unlock your windfall's potential

Caroline Merrell suggests how A&L members who decide to sell their free shares immediately can make best use of the cash



ANGUS MEWSE

After months of disputes and controversy, the Alliance & Leicester, the UK's fourth-biggest building society, makes its stock market debut on Monday. Cazenove, the broker acting on behalf of the society, says about 600,000 members will sell their shares immediately, making between £1,200 and £1,300, releasing more than £700 million in to the economy.

An analysis by Nikko Europe, the securities house, based on previous takeovers of building societies, shows that two thirds of the money will be saved, leaving one third to be spent. Nikko believes this money will be spent on holidays, home improvements, jewellery and clothing.

Those who have opted to sell straight away may be wondering what is the most cost-effective way of using their cash. Here *The Times* considers the options:

■ Many will be searching out the next society likely to succumb to a takeover or become a quoted company, especially in the light of remarks this week from John Burke, chief executive of the Bristol & West Building Society. Mr Burke expressed interest in taking over another society once the Bristol & West passes into the control of the Bank of Ireland.

The Halifax Building Society is seen as another predator once it joins the stock market. This means that, regardless of their outspoken commitment to mutuality, larger societies remain bid targets. Remember that all the societies now in the process of floating and becoming banks once pledged undying commitment to mutuality. The diehards are the Nationwide (minimum investment in a share account with membership rights is £500) the Bradford & Bingley (£500) the Britannia (£2,000), the Yorkshire (£1,000), the Birmingham Midshires (£1,000), the Portman (£100), the Coventry (£100), the Skipton (£2,000), the Leeds & Holbeck (£1,000) and the Chelsea (£2,500).

■ Mortgages. Paying off a chunk of a mortgage could be cost-effective. Homeowners pondering this, should make sure they do not incur any penalties for paying off some of their loan. Many borrowers with fixed-interest and discounted mortgages will be charged a redemption fee on partial repayment. John Charcol, the mortgage broker, points out that a borrower four years into a £50,000 loan over 25 years could save £9.42 a month by paying off £1,200, provided that no redemption penalties are incurred — a total saving of £2,373. Alternatively, the borrower could keep the monthly payments at £338, thus repaying the loan a year early and saving £3,625.

Some serious consideration should be given to reducing credit card or other debts

■ If you have credit card or other debts, you should seriously consider using your windfall cash to repay borrowings.

RBS Advanta, the card company, estimates that people who do not pay off credit card bills every month carry an average debt of £1,000 on their cards. The cost of borrowing £1,000 on a credit card varies between £144 a year for the People's Bank card (APR 14.4 per cent) and £221 a year for Barclaycard (22.3 per cent). To achieve the same savings through investing £1,200, a saver would need an account that paid 18 per cent interest or an investment that had an 18 per cent return. The top building society postal account pays 6 per cent.

■ Personal loans. According to Natwest, a £5,000 personal loan with a five-year repayment period and an interest rate of 15.9 per cent will cost £118 a month. Using the £1,200 windfall to reduce this outstanding debt would save £2,500. To match this saving, the £1,200 would have to be invested to produce an annual return of 50 per cent.

■ Those who have paid off all their debts could consider an investment in National Savings. National Savings products include the one-year First Option Bond, which has a fixed taxable interest rate of 6 per cent gross. Those aged over 60 and who are willing to tie their money up for five years can invest in the third series Pensioners Guaranteed Income Bond. This pays 7 per cent fixed interest, which is taxable, but paid gross. They could also invest in National Savings certificates, on which the interest is tax-free. The 44th Issue Certificates pay interest of 5.35 per cent fixed, while the 10th Issue Index-Linked Certificates pay fixed interest of 2.5 per cent plus the inflation rate.

■ If you believe that the wave of demutualisation in the building society world is finished for the time being, you will have a wider choice of institutions. You may even contemplate opening an account with one of the converted societies, because they will be offering higher rates of interest to ensure that customers do not all decamp once they have received their free shares.

For those with £1,200 to save, *MoneyFacts*, the savings information guide, recommends an instant access account with Co-operative Bank, which pays annual interest of 5 per cent. Sainsbury's Bank, an offshoot of the supermarket chain, offers interest of 5.75 per cent on its instant access account. First National, an Irish Republic building society, offers two postal accounts paying 5 per cent. First National has ambitions to demutualise, but UK savers would not have membership rights and would be excluded from any payouts.

■ Those who are prepared to lock up their savings could take out a tax-exempt special savings account (Tessa), if they do not already have one. Tessa interest is paid free of tax provided the capital remains untouched for five years. The Labour Party has said that it would not abolish Tessas, but there is no guarantee that this tax-free shelter will remain available. Best Tessas include those offered by the Birmingham Midshires, the Holmesdale, the Principality and the Melton Mowbray.

For those with less patience, *Moneyfacts* suggests the Nationwide Building Society's 7 per cent fixed rate bond or the Bristol & West's Year Plus Bond, which offers 7.05 per cent interest.

■ Personal equity plans. Those who have opted to encash their shares lose the concession granted by the Inland Revenue, which allowed shares to be transferred to a Pep for nil value. However, there will certainly be some who have sold shares and now want to take out a Pep. BESt Investment, the financial adviser, recommends plans from Credit Suisse, Schroder and Perpetual. A total of £6,000 can be invested annually.

WEEKEND MONEY
is edited by Anne Ashworth

Market forces to boost price

PETER TRIEVNOR

Krystyna Rzemieniecka is holding on to her A&L shares

Demand for shares in the Alliance & Leicester seems set to be strong on Monday, when the society finally reaches the market. Despite more than one quarter of A&L shareholders having chosen to sell their shares immediately, brokers believe that institutional demand for the shares will outstrip supply.

The unwanted shares are being sold off in a series of three auctions held by Cazenove — the first of which was yesterday.

The original estimate for the share price was 480p, but brokers are now revising this up to 520p per share, bringing the average payout to £1,300. After the initial burst of activity, the share price is likely to be further boosted by the index-tracking funds which will buy the shares when the A&L joins the FT-SE 100 index on June 23.

Although the Alliance & Leicester is keeping in place the five-year protection against takeover, many believe it will be a target. A predator has to get 75 per cent of the shares before the protection disappears. A&L would also lose the protection if it made a purchase. A bid could push up the price to 685p.

The prospect of a future bid battle has encouraged thousands of Alliance & Leicester members to hold on to their shares.

Krystyna Rzemieniecka, a reader from Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, who runs her own marketing consultancy, KR Consulting, has decided to hold on to her stake. Even if the share price rises much higher than £5 over the next week, she will resist the temptation to sell because she is confident that the price has further to go.

She said: "In my view A&L will seek a merger or become a takeover target. I see the company following the pattern of TSB and becoming part of a larger group. In banking, you need economies of scale."

CAROLINE MERRELL AND ANNE ASHWORTH

New government, new taxes

PERSONAL INVESTOR

GRAHAM SEARJEANT

Decisions by millions of people about what to do with windfall shares or cash from converting building societies and insurance companies are becoming critical to managing the economy after the election. No one is sure whether billions will be spent, or used to replenish credit lines.

A year or so ago, when the economy was growing below forecast, bullish City economists were looking to the recipients of cash from Cheltenham & Gloucester and National & Provincial to boost consumer spending. Now that worries focus on overheating, the more fashionable line is that investors in Alliance & Leicester, Halifax and Woolwich will keep their shares or reinvest cash.

The question resurfaced when returns from the A&L suggested that nearly a quarter of the 2.3 million people each entitled to between £1,200 and £1,300 worth of shares wanted cash as fast as possible. That was a lot more than Halifax research had suggested. Eight years ago, a quarter of Abbey National's initial shareholders had sold after a year, which seems more sensible.

One reason for hanging on to anything but a tiny holding is the prospect that fund managers who need such big index stocks might bid prices up to prise shares out of private investors' hands. Another reason is that newly floated groups can exploit the advantages they sought in converting. And some will be caught up in mergers to consolidate the financial services industry.

For economists, the issue is not whether people sell, but whether they spend the cash. This has become more urgent because the debate over policy after the election has hotted up. Whoever became Chancellor, the argument went, was expected to accede to Eddie George's demand for higher base rates. By year's end, rates might have moved from 6 to 7 per cent. Labour's Gordon Brown would want to establish credibility fast.

The argument changed after sterling started rising last autumn. This week it regained its 1990 level, which proved too high in the exchange-rate mechanism. The effects are showing in virtually zero factory gate inflation and pressure on high street prices. Investors are suffering as companies queue to report lower profit prospects, especially the likes of Reed International and Reuters that depend on exports or foreign earnings. Analysts' forecasts of 1997 earnings growth have fallen at least two points, but still range from about 5 to 8 per cent.

With inflation falling and a high pound hurting, tax rises to curb incipient excess consumer spending look better-targeted and less damaging. A study by BZW argues that the budget deficit is £10 billion too high for this stage of the cycle. Mr Brown is pledged to soak millions of utility shareholders in an instant supplementary Budget. He may be shy to raise more taxes, or levy conversion windfalls, so soon after not mentioning them at the polls.

Only early tax rises would, however, avoid higher interest rates. A Tory Budget in November might be just in time. Mr Brown does not plan a second effort until March. BZW nonetheless suggests he could take £5 billion out of the corporate sector in bits and pieces, partly by more cuts in investment allowances for low-tax sectors such as leisure, brewing and property. A higher corporation tax rate is less likely, but would hit big domestic groups such as retailers and food manufacturers worst. The fraught temptation to hit pension fund and charity dividends should be resisted pending quiet study.

Already bearish for 1997, BZW has cut forecast 1998 earnings growth from 10 to 8 per cent on higher corporate and consumer taxes. That would leave many sectors overvalued and low-growth companies with thin dividend cover exposed. Attacks on pension fund income would be even more damaging, hitting values relative to gilt-edged and forcing many companies to raise contributions.

There are too many ifs in this analysis to scare small investors off the market. But those thinking to swap windfall shares for unit trusts might think again.

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Maddening pension plight

COMMENT

ANNE ASHWORTH

Personal Finance Editor

Anyone now trying to arrange a pension must feel like Alice at the Mad Hatter's tea party, assailed on all sides by confusing messages.

Each political party is eager to encourage us to save for our old age. But they are less clear on how this aim should be achieved. Labour's stakeholder pension plans are sketchy. The Conservatives' Basic Pension Plus proposals are based on overly optimistic investment return predictions.

Political uncertainty is also adding to the repercussions of the new Pensions Act. There is now concern that rumoured Labour tax changes could force companies to immediately spend £40 billion on replenishing their funds, or fall foul of the Act's crucial minimum funding requirement. Despite Labour's denials, many suspect that Gordon Brown, should he set up home in No 11, would cut the rate of advance corporation tax (ACT), the tax paid on dividend distributions. Pension funds, as non-taxpayers, are entitled to reclaim this tax on the dividends they receive. A lower rate would mean a drop in income for the schemes, forcing companies to reach into their pockets.

In this atmosphere, an increasing number of employers, mindful of expense, are switching from traditional final salary schemes to group personal pensions (see page 34).

This trend must be closely observed, or it could turn into a successor scandal to the personal pension affair. The PIA watchdog must keep its pledge to monitor the group personal pension plan sales, ordering insurers to curb their charges. They should also be obliged to inform employees of the dangers of contributing too little, a warning that no politican has yet dared to make.

Blind faith

BOSSES at some financial service businesses are living in the past. This is the only possible explanation for their lack of action to date on the millennium computer problem (see page 33). Institutions questioned by *The Times* claimed to have the situation "under control". Some seemed admirably prepared, but others were vague about the steps they are taking to ensure that records pass intact into the next century.

This less than reassuring response provoked images of Corporal Jones from *Dad's Army* rushing round the church hall, shouting: "Don't panic!"

If Reuters, the financial information group, concedes that some of its sophisticated products could be hit by the millennium time bomb, then the average building society need feel less ashamed of its slow progress.

This does not mean, however, that customers should be too sympathetic. Ask your bank or building society whether it is prepared for midnight on December 31, 1999. You may not get an answer, but you might spur them on to greater efforts.

Act now to fix a rate

Sara McConnell on why the best mortgage deals are disappearing

In a fix: borrowers should check the lock-in penalties

The best fixed-rate mortgage deals are disappearing fast as borrowers, seeking certainty in the run-up to the general election, commandeer the available funds. More lenders are expected to withdraw existing offers next week and replace them with more expensive deals that reflect the rising cost of buying funds in the wholesale money markets.

Five-year fixed rates below 7 per cent are now thin on the ground. Most are now more expensive than the standard current variable rate of 7.24 per cent, with a number of lenders starting to offer new deals up to half a percentage point dearer. Patrick Bunton, of London & Country Mortgages, says: "The typical five-year rate is now 8 per cent and five-year money is edging up."

Advisers argue the higher rates, particularly over five years, are almost certainly still a price worth paying for borrowers nervous of higher interest rates. Interest rates are expected to rise after the election, particularly if Labour wins. Ian Darby, of John Charcol, says: "If you compare a fixed and variable rate I can't believe people will lose with a fixed rate." By contrast, discounts do not protect borrowers from higher standard rates, as their rate will also rise.

Abbey National is one of the lenders that still has money to lend at a five-year fixed rate of 6.99 per cent. The rate is available only to those moving house and they must have a deposit of at least 25 per cent of the purchase price. But the Abbey does not impose hefty "lock-in" penalties that keep borrowers tied to the same lender's variable rate after the end of the loan term on pain of a large penalty payment. Such lock-ins are now almost standard among lenders and can add substantially to the cost of an apparently cheap rate for borrowers who need to escape from their lender if its rates become uncompetitive.

Other lenders have this week withdrawn the rates that made them best buys. The **Leeds & Holbeck Building Society** has withdrawn its five-year fixed rate of 6.95 per cent for loans up to 90 per cent of the property's value and replaced it with three new five-year rates. The rate for borrowers with a 25 per cent deposit to put down is now 7.15 per cent, while those needing a loan of 95 per cent or more of the property's value will have to pay 7.49 per cent to fix for five years. Those not taking buildings and contents insurance with the society will pay 0.24 per cent more. There is a lock-in penalty of six months' interest that ends two years after the five-year fixed term.

The **Nationwide Building Society**, has bucked the upward trend with a new range of five-year rates lower than those it has just withdrawn. But the rates still look comparatively expensive. New borrowers will pay 7.89 per cent and existing borrowers moving house 7.79 per cent if they agree to take out buildings and contents insurance with the society. Borrowers wanting to arrange their own insurance will pay 8.09 per cent and 7.99 per cent respectively. There are no lock-in periods after the end of the fixed-rate term.

Some of the most competitive rates, such as the Abbey's, are not on offer to remortgage customers in a bid to encourage a more "normal" market.

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هكذا من الأصل

Anne Ashworth on what it takes to turn a protégé into a *wunderkind*

Woods: competition fees cost £20,000 a year

Kennedy: studied at Yehudi Menuhin school

Henman: talent spotted by Nick Lloyd at 11

Tiger, Tiger burning bright but success comes at a price

The skills of Tiger Woods, the 21-year-old golfer who triumphed in the US Masters at Augusta this week, have won him more than $1 million, a mansion in Orlando, Florida, and Tyra Banks, the supermodel, as a companion. When he turned professional last year, Tiger was granted $43 million in sponsorship from Nike, the sportswear manufacturer, and $3 million from Titleist, the ball maker.

British parents who believe that their children may display the potential to achieve similar feats, either on the sports field or in the concert hall, must be prepared for a considerable outlay to ensure that these talents are developed.

To turn your child into a musical or sporting star costs a six-figure sum in training and equipment, unless you are successful in getting some financial support from one of the bodies that help the household names of the future. According to one estimate, it takes £500,000 to create a Wimbledon champion. Even if your child merely pursues music or sport as pleasurable pastimes, the bill can be large, with £500-a-week sessions at Florida camps, or £1,000 violins.

Earl Woods, Tiger's 64-year-old father may now be president of his son's company, EJW Inc, but the family had to find $20,000 a year in competition costs to enter Tiger in the junior championships that set him on the road to Augusta. There were also the expensive services of John Anselmo, the Californian golf professional who tutored Tiger from the age of ten. To give their *wunderkind* ample opportunity to play, the Woods moved next door to a golf course. However, Tiger did benefit from a golf scholarship to Stanford University, to study economics. Similarly convenient academic arrangements do not exist in the UK.

Here an aspiring Tiger will need special coaching, which may be available through school or through a local golf course. For example, the Wee Wonders course for five to eight-year-olds at the Foxhills golf club in Ottershaw, Surrey, costs £25 for a monthly series of four weekly golf lessons of 45 minutes each. Foxhills also offers special weekend and after-school coaching for the over-nines.

The Golf Foundation, the national body for the development of junior golf, subsidises coaching at 2,000 schools, paying half the cost of a professional who gives instruction to a group of pupils.

Like all sports, golf requires special kit. At Nevada Bob's, the golf chain, you can economise by buying half-sized clubs singly but each will still cost £11.99. A junior bag sells for £24.99. A pair of golf shoes costs £27.99.

Budding Nick Faldos like to holiday in Florida, not for Disneyland but for one of the golf camps. At the David Leadbetter golfing academy in Bradenton, Florida, intensive coaching costs $998 a week for children who board, $798 a week without. Leadbetter is the man who improved Faldo's golf swing to the greater enrichment of coach and player.

Tim Henman, the tennis player, is estimated to have earned £1 million in 1996, most of which he claims to spend on tennis, paying the salaries of his coach and other staff. His sponsors include Adidas, Midland and Slazenger.

> ‘To turn your child into a sporting or musical star involves a six-figure sum’

At 11, Henman, now Britain's number one, was talent-spotted by Nick Lloyd, the tennis player turned entrepreneur, and sent to Reed's School in Chobham, Surrey. Other past pupils from this tennis alma mater include Jamie Delgado, the Davis Cup player. Both Henman and Delgado received scholarships from the Slater Foundation, set up by Jim Slater, the financier, who is now looking for another sport to support.

Lloyd, who has provided considerable financial support to Delgado, calculated the cost of turning the player, now ranked number eight in Britain, into a potential Wimbledon champion at £500,000 to £600,000. This includes coaching, travel and staff.

For those not fortunate to be selected for stardom by Lloyd, the Lawn Tennis Association says that coaching and court hire can cost around £50 a week. The organisation calculates that travelling to tournaments and staying at hotels costs another £1,000 a year. Rackets account for another £300 to £500 a year.

The country's top 150 young players are sponsored by Rover, which contributes about £400,000 to £500,000 a year to the project. The best players get more to cover the cost of international travel. Eight of the fortunate Rover scheme members are now attending Bisham Abbey near Marlow in Buckinghamshire, a champions hothouse. Each has a personal coach.

Some parents are prepared to sell their homes to finance their children's training at one of the US tennis camps, such as Nick Bollettieri's academy, also based in Bradenton, Florida. Bollettieri made champions of Andre Agassi and Jennifer Capriati. A week of summer camp for 8 to 18-year-olds at the academy will set back parents $798, including board.

Nigel Kennedy, the violinist whose recording of Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons* is one of the bestselling classical albums of all time, gave his first performance at 15 with Stephane Grappelli. At the height of his celebrity in 1992, Mr Kennedy was earning around £450,000 per concert. The world's other millionaire violinists include Itzhak Perlman, whose annual income is put at £5.5 million, and Anne-Sophie Mutter, £2.5 million.

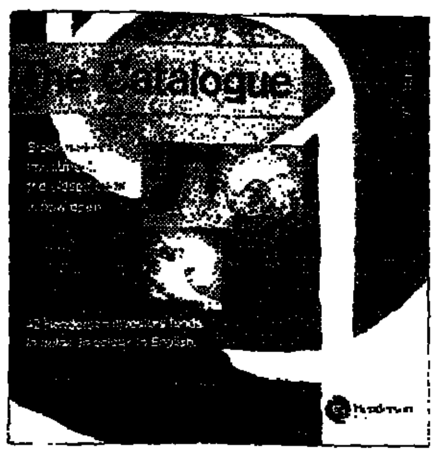
From six to 16, Mr Kennedy studied at the Yehudi Menuhin school in Stoke d'Abernon, Surrey, which takes children from eight to 18. Here parents can hope for some contribution towards the fees from the Government's music and ballet scheme, which covers the Menuhin and other schools such as Chetham's in Manchester, and the Royal Ballet School. A free boarding place is given if the parents' income is below £8,498. Parents make a contribution to fees on a sliding scale. For example, those with an income of £40,000 could expect to pay £2,946 towards one child's fees.

Mr Kennedy then proceeded to the prestigious Juilliard School in New York, where entry is by audition. The fees are $14,200 a year, which excludes boarding. Juilliard teachers include the celebrated Dorothy DeLay, mentor to Sarah Chang, the American violinist who made her debut at five. The expertise of Miss DeLay or one of the other half dozen top violin tutors is seen as essential in creating a star whose CD's top the charts.

The right instrument is crucial throughout training. Mr Kennedy, who recently played his first British concert for five years, has a Guarnerius violin costing some £750,000. A beginner can make do with a more modestly priced instrument; at JP Guivier, the London instrument shop, you will pay £74.95 for a Chinese-made half-size violin. Older students graduate to turn-of-the-century French or German violins, priced between £500 and £1,000, excluding bow and case. This is not the limit. One parent of a future virtuoso commented: "At around 18, it's second mortgage time. You'll be paying £10,000 for a fiddle."

Additional research by Lizanne Rose

The Good PEP Guide.



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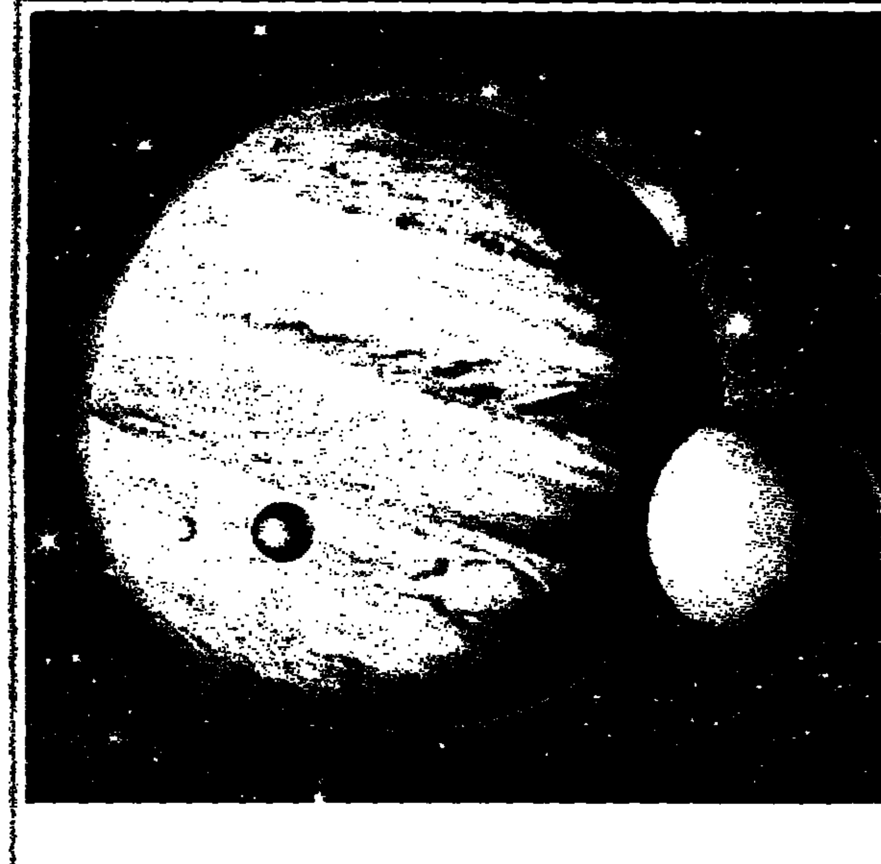

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Matthew Wall interprets the latest economic indicators

Rate rise in the wings

THE MARKET AND THE ELECTION

Fish and chips on the campaign trail, but baby-boomers like the Blairs spend on holidays

As Europe takes centre stage in the election campaign, the economic indicators and the markets seem to mirror the contradictions and confusion within the Tory ranks.

Last month's manufacturing prices continued to fall as sterling's strength kept imported goods and materials comparatively cheap for business. If there are signs of an overheating economy they are certainly not evident in this sector.

Meanwhile, the British Retail Consortium reported a fall in the growth of the value of retail sales in March compared with February, indicating a tough competitive environment on the high street and downward pressure on prices. And this week's underlying inflation figure of 2.7 per cent for the year to March, which is close to the Government's 2.5 per cent target, makes talk of a booming economy seem out of kilter.

But Rob Buckland, equity strategist at HSBC James Capel, the broker, says: "Inflation is a lagging indicator. All it says is that the economy was weak a year ago. We are a little bit worried that consumers are driving inflation up. Ideally the market would like increased taxes on consumers to slow them down and interest rates left where they are. Economists are kill-joys, they don't like consumers spending."

Bill Robinson, director of London Economics, says: "There is a strong consensus that we are moving into boom mode. The situation is perfectly salvageable, but action needs to be taken now. The new Chancellor will need to raise taxes as well as interest rates to cool the economy."

Figures from the Office for National Statistics this week showed that annual earnings are growing by 5 per cent in the year to February, up from 4.75 per cent to January. This increase in real disposable income is music to the leisure sector's ears. Paul Slattery, leisure analyst at Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, the merchant bank, says: "Affluent baby-boomers aged 40-64 have moved to the stage where they are buying services rather than consumer durables. They are spending more on holidays, hotels, cinemas, casinos, theatres, and sports. This is good news for all hospitality stocks, especially companies like Ladbroke and Whitbread."

The City is banking on interest rates going up after the election and reaching about 7 per cent by the end of the year. If the new Chancellor fails to act, heavy selling of sterling could follow, its price would fall, and the price of imports rise. The combination of more expensive goods in the shops coupled with real increases in disposable income could pour petrol on inflation's embers. All this translates into continued uncertainty and volatility in the UK stock market. Election shenanigans and Wall Street's palpitations contribute to the day-to-day oscillations on the FT-SE 100 graph. With the Dow Jones industrial average bungee-jumping 150 points down one day and up 135 the next, the FT-SE does not know which way to turn. After last week's close of 4,270.7 it fell again on Monday, but recovered. Yesterday it rose 11.6 points to close at 4,310.5.

Investors would be well-advised to drip-feed their money into such a volatile market rather than trying to gauge the best time to invest a lump sum. Volatility is actually the regular saver's friend given that when the market falls they get more for their money.

Prices of second-hand policies soar

A frenzy of speculation over which mutual life insurer will be next to fall into the clutches of a big corporation has sent demand for, and prices of, second-hand endowment policies soaring.

Top of the list is Friends Provident, the mutual whose management denies it is up for sale but which is widely regarded in City circles as the most likely to demutualise in the future.

According to Beale Dobie, a company that buys and sells with-profits endowment policies, Scottish Widows, Scottish Life and Scottish Provident are also tipped as likely takeover targets, which would make attractive purchases for hungry composite insurers.

Analysts have predicted that the arrival of Alastair Lyons as chief executive of the National Provident Institution (NPI) could eventually mean the life insurer will demutualise. Mr Lyons was chief executive of the National & Provincial Building Society when it was bought by Abbey National last year. In spite of his remarks that NPI has a long-term future as a mutual, speculation continues that NPI's days as an independent are numbered.

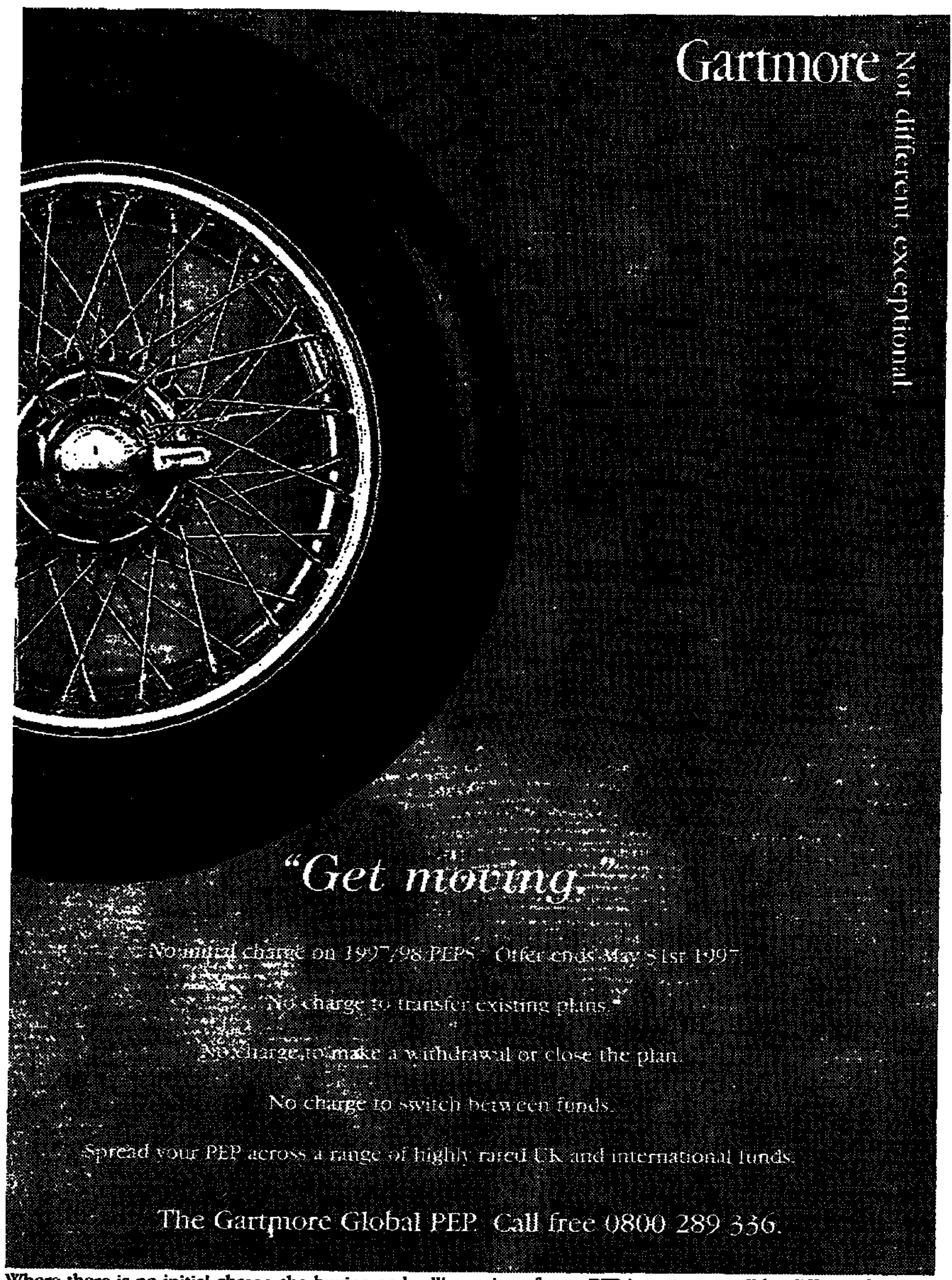
The market for second-hand policies is worth £200 million, but this is only a fraction of the value of policies that are surrendered every year.

Beale Dobie and other traders are trying to spread the message that they can offer investors between 15 and 40 per cent more for their policy than they would receive as a surrender value from the life company.

David Beale, one of the company's directors, said: "We want to make clear to people the advantages of selling rather than surrendering their endowment policy as policyholders can realise a substantially higher price, on average £1,500 more."

He points to the example of *Coronation Street* character Mike Baldwin, who has announced he may have to cash in his life policies to compensate for his factory going up in smoke. Mr Beale said: "The last thing he needs is to find out too late that he could have received an average 15 per cent more for each of his policies."

MARIANNE CURPHEY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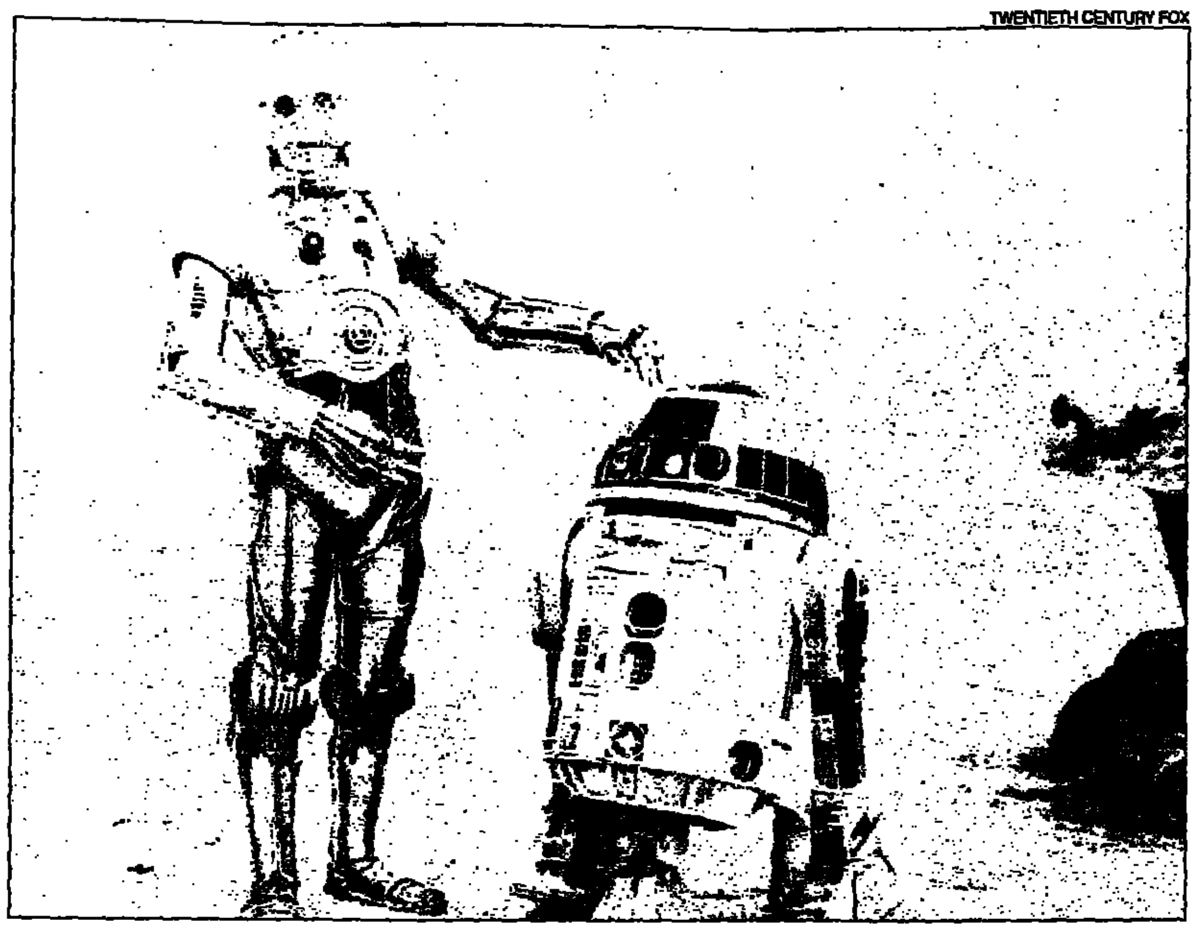
Time bomb is still ticking

Marianne Curphey, Gavin Lumsden and **Nathan Yates** on the mammoth efforts required to avoid millennium disaster


TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX

The financial services sector hopes its computers prove as reliable as C3PO and R2-D2 of *Star Wars* fame

The financial services industry is gearing up for a huge disaster avoidance campaign with its bid to avert "millennium bug" chaos. Banks, building societies, insurance companies and fund managers fear that they could be hit by mass computer failures as their machines grapple with the switchover from 1999 to 2000.

Although finance companies are spending millions of pounds to tackle the millennium problem, experts say the industry is poorly prepared.

Because most computers count only the last two digits of the year, the move from 99 to 00 will appear as a 99-year leap backwards in time. If no adjustments are made, this will cause at least a major disruption in records, and at worst a complete systems failure.

Repercussions for customers are potentially serious. A leap backwards in time could result in all the interest on your building society account being wiped out. On the other hand, some computers may overcome the illogicality of losing 100 years by assuming time has instead moved forward. This could add a century of interest to your savings, although you could also receive 100 years' worth of mortgage repayment bills or standing orders. If systems shut down, records could be lost altogether.

Since many older systems interpret the figure 99 in the year box as an instruction to close a file, this could occur without a total shutdown in some cases. The loss of records could wipe out bank and building society accounts and share records. If enough computers are paralysed, currency markets could be damaged and fund managers' investments could be frozen.

The insurance industry, which needs to calculate pension maturity values and yearly bonuses way beyond the year 2000, is taking the threat of computer chaos very seriously. The British Insurance and Investment Brokers' Association (BIIBA) has established a Year 2000 Project Team, a task force of brokers, insurers and IT consultants who next week will begin inspections of software houses to monitor progress. Commercial Union, Eagle Star, Guardian, General Accident, Norwich Union and Royal & SunAlliance are all lending financial support.

Mike Williams, chief executive of the BIIBA, said: "The millennium is probably the first non-negotiable deadline that industry and commerce have ever faced, but we are still seeing far too much talk and not enough action."

By December 31, 1998 all software houses must be able to provide evidence that they are taking steps to deal with the problem. Otherwise, the BIIBA will recommend that its 2,500 corporate insurance broking members switch to another software supplier.

James Duffell, a spokesman for NU, said: "There is certainly no room for complacency. Not only are we looking at our systems, we are also asking our suppliers to examine theirs, to ensure there are no glitches."

Experts say that companies which have not begun reprogramming their machines stand little chance of stamping out the millennium bug. But many institutions admit they have not yet started making technical alterations.

Building societies like the Alliance & Leicester and fund managers such as Henderson and Jupiter are still in the planning phase of their operations.

Even state-run financial bodies are lagging behind the timetable recommended by IT companies. The Department of Social Security will not begin adjusting its computers until August, although it insists that there is no chance of claimants being credited with 100 years' worth of income support.

The Inland Revenue acknowledges that it faces headaches over the PAYE (pay as you earn) system which collects tax directly from employees' wages. Not only does the Revenue have to update its network, it has to ensure it tallies with those of payroll firms.

Most financial institutions contacted by *The Times* said that they anticipated no millennium disasters. Nationwide Building Society is employing 180 staff to reprogram its computer network, and both the Halifax and the Woolwich building societies expect to spend 200 man years reviewing their systems. The Alliance & Leicester and the Bradford & Bingley Building Society are already hiring extra staff to help with the process.

Nationwide's reprogramming scheme is widely known as one of the industry's most comprehensive, but its director, Ian Beale, admits that even his company cannot be certain the millennium will turn smoothly.

Mr Beale said: "We're devoting a large amount of resources to this issue, but it would be naive to guarantee that there will be no problems at all. The task is huge."

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Leaseholder reforms delayed

Thousands of leaseholders in dispute with their landlords over high service charge bills, poor management or shoddy repairs will have to wait at least until summer before they can get access to a cheaper, easier system of redress.

Many have been pinning their hopes on new laws passed last year and due to be implemented this month, which would allow service charge disputes to be decided by an expanded network of Leasehold Valuation Tribunals. But the final orders necessary to begin the expansion of tribunals were not laid before Parliament was dissolved for the general election.

The tribunals would charge fixed fees and would not have the power to award costs, unlike county courts. Under the current system only county courts can deal with service charge disputes. But many leaseholders have been reluctant to take their landlord to court, fearing they could face large bills for their landlord's costs if they lose.

Leasehold campaigners and advisers say there is a huge build-up of owners of leasehold properties desperate to take their cases to the tribunal. Peter Haler, chief executive of Lease, the government-funded advisory service, predicts an "absolute logjam" when the tribunals start handling service charge disputes. Lease has dealt with 2,000 service charge problems in the first quarter of this year, compared with 5,000 all of last year.

The new Government will have to decide whether to sign the orders, or scrap them and take other action. This would further delay chances of easier redress.

The Conservatives proposed expanding the role of tribunals last year and a new Tory administration would almost certainly sign the order allowing the new tribunals to go ahead.

Labour has made clear it supports easier and cheaper resolution for service charge disputes. But it is also keen to implement more fundamental reforms of the leasehold system, including giving leaseholders the right to manage. It would be open to a Labour housing minister to decide on a radical overhaul of the system, delaying the immediate setting up of the tribunals.

SARA MCCONNELL

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Ask the right questions before you join, says **Sara McConnell**

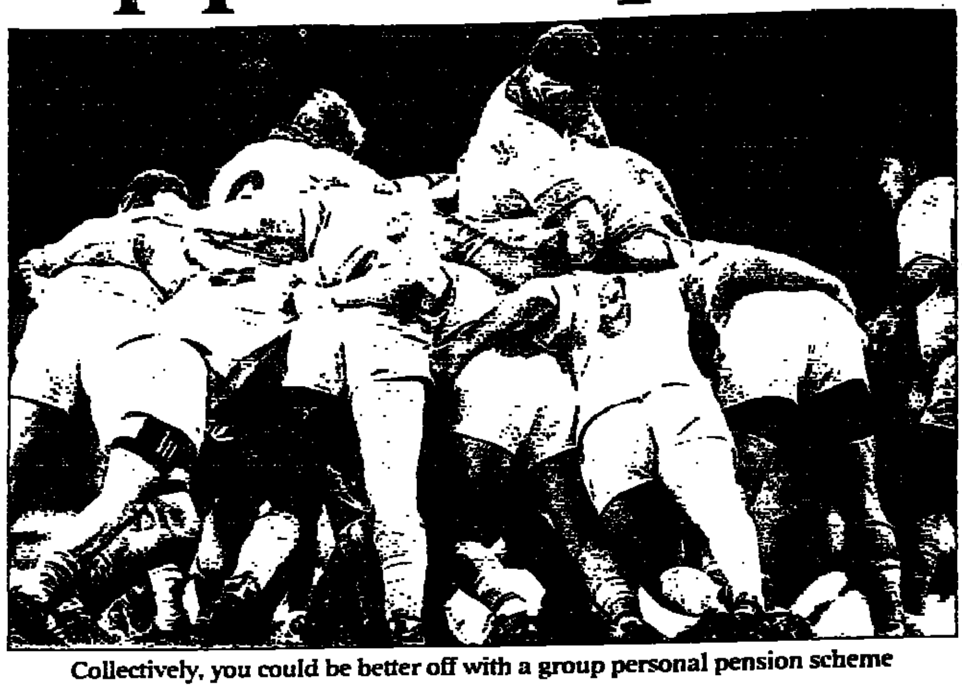
Pitfalls and privileges of group pension plans

Your employer has just sent you a leaflet saying he is planning to set up a group personal pension scheme, and asking you if you are interested. Should you be? Or is there a catch?

Sales of group personal pensions (GPPs) by insurance companies to employers are booming. Industry figures show a 50 per cent increase in sales in the past year.

But there are fears that this could be the latest sales bonanza for the insurance industry, already widely discredited by the long-running personal pension mis-selling scandal. Employers are also being accused of setting up such schemes to avoid draconian new occupational pension rules which give scheme members more protection, at a greater cost to employers.

So what is going on? Here are some answers.



Collectively, you could be better off with a group personal pension scheme

Q What is a group personal pension?

A As its name suggests, it is a cluster of personal pensions set up by an insurance company for an employer. Each employee has his or her own pension "pot" under the administrative umbrella of the employer. Both employer and employee will normally contribute to the plan. Like a personal pension, contributions are invested in the stock market and the final fund depends on how well the investment has performed. If you move jobs, you can take your pension with you.

Q So why not just go and buy a personal pension?

A There are two main reasons. The first is that most employers are reluctant to contribute to personal pensions taken out by their employees off their own bat, contrary to the hopes of the Tory Government which introduced personal pensions in 1988. But the employer's contribution, typically about 5 per cent of your pensionable salary, is a valuable way to boost your retirement income. The second reason is that employers should in theory be able to negotiate a better deal on charges than you.

Group personal pensions have the same potential disadvantage as personal pensions of high upfront charges, including large commissions for advisers arranging the scheme. These costs are met by you, not your employer, by deduction from your contributions. Ideally, according to Mike Wadsworth, partner at Watsons, the actuaries, you should expect to pay no more than an annual fund management charge and possibly a monthly policy fee.

Q Should I be worried if my employer offers me a group personal pension?

A It depends on your circumstances. Not necessarily. If you have previously had no pension with your employer at all, and he is offering to set up a good value pension to which he will contribute, this is almost certainly welcome.

Equally, if you are offered the option to change from a more traditional scheme (run by trustees and based either on contributions or on your final salary), you may benefit from a group personal pension if you change jobs frequently, because you are not bound by transfer rules.

Q What should I be looking for?

A Find out how much the new scheme will cost you, as you, rather than your employer will be paying. Group personal pensions are regulated under the Financial Services Act (unlike trustee administered schemes, see below) and you have the right to demand disclosure of costs and commissions, as well as obtain performance projections. You should also ask for details of scheme benefits like widows' and dependants' benefits and life assurance. Employers should arrange life cover alongside a group personal pension to pay out to dependants if an employee dies before retiring.

Q I'm still pretty suspicious of anything to do with personal pensions. How well will group personal pensions be regulated?

A Group personal pensions, like other personal pensions, are regulated by the Personal Investment Authority (PIA). This may ring warning bells as the PIA is still attempting to unravel one of the most disastrous financial scandals of all time. Hundreds of thousands of people were mistakenly advised to transfer from traditional occupational pensions to personal pensions.

The PIA is promising tight monitoring of group personal pensions. But critics point out that last year it relaxed rules which forced insurers to advise each employee individually. Now they can rely on collective advice via videos, seminars and other methods. The argument in favour of this is that it cuts costs.

Occupational pension schemes administered under trust are regulated by the Occupational Pensions Regulatory Authority (Opra). Opra has only been up and running two weeks, so is untested. It can only act if told there is a problem, as it does not carry out monitoring visits. It is concerned that some salesmen may be using the perceived threat of onerous requirements under the Pensions Act to persuade employers into setting up group personal pensions.

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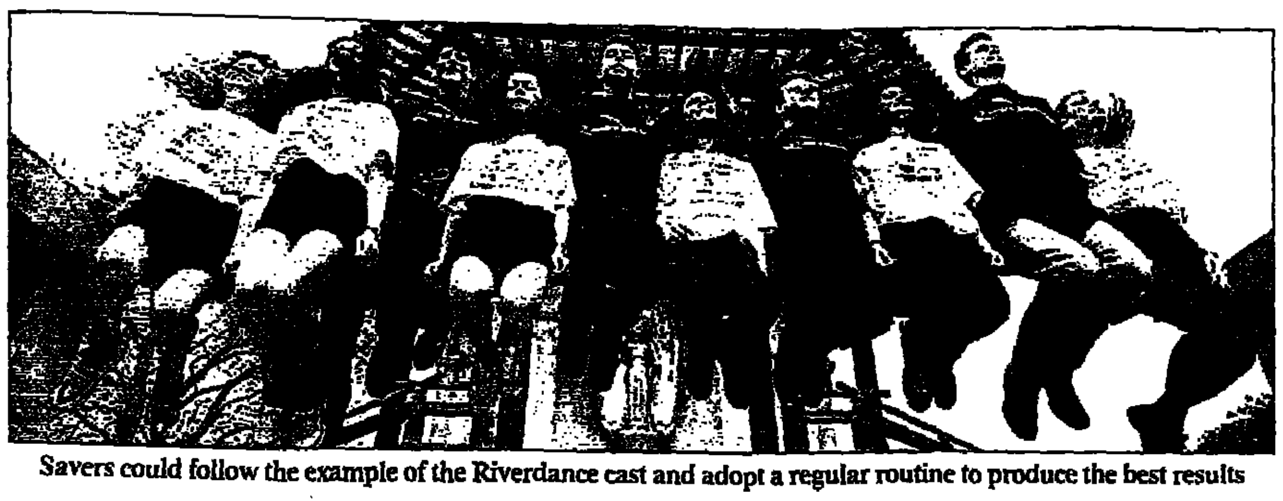

Savers could follow the example of the Riverdance cast and adopt a regular routine to produce the best results

Step by step saving

Regular investments could pay dividends, **Karen Zagor** says

When the dust settles after next month's election, the winning party will have to turn its attention to the more mundane task of governing the country and fulfilling pre-election promises. One area that the Conservative and Labour parties have both promised to tackle is savings.

Recent studies have shown that the average Belgian household puts aside more than twice as much as the average UK household in savings. And savings levels in the UK fall short of those in Canada, Japan, the US, France and Germany. Although the Tories and Labour have both paid lip-service to improving the UK's savings climate, Demos, the independent think-tank, says their proposals will not be sufficient to make a difference.

The savings shortfall is a cause of real concern both to government and to individuals who have not set aside enough to weather a financial crisis. We no longer live in a society where the State steps in if we are too ill or too old to work. Without sizeable savings, most of us face the prospect of real financial hardship in our old age.

The problem is that it is easier to convince people to gamble on lottery tickets or Premium Bonds than it is to create a savings culture. National Savings dropped its regular savings product — the Yearly Bond — two years ago because there was not enough demand. The bond paid the same level of interest as National Savings' fixed-interest certificates, currently 5.35 per cent, free of tax to savers who put aside between £20 and £400 a month.

There are, however, some products on the market that offer attractive returns to regular savers. The Bradford & Bingley's Monthly Saver account pays 6.5 per cent a year to savers who deposit between £10 and £100 a month over a three-year term. There are interest penalties if the account is closed early.

The Nationwide's Bonus Saver account pays 6.5 per cent on monthly deposits between £20 and £1,000. Savers can skip one payment a year. Withdrawals are penalised with a 3.25 per cent loss of interest.

West Bromwich Building Society is paying even more, at 6.75 per cent a year, but the minimum monthly deposit is £40, with a maximum of £2,000. Savers need to make ten payments a year, and they are allowed two withdrawals with no penalties. Windfall seekers should note that the account does not confer membership status.

For those who can afford only single-figure monthly savings, Coventry Building Society's Bonus account will accept monthly payments of £1, with two withdrawals permitted each year. The account pays 5 per cent a year.

The other way to save regularly is through an investment or unit trust savings scheme, but you have to be disciplined to make the monthly payments.

Jonathan Gumpel, of Brooks Macdonald Gayer, the independent financial adviser, says: "One of the problems with these schemes is that they are so flexible that people do not always stick with them. I think if they were called ten-year savings plans and had minor penalties for lapses in payments then people would be more likely to let them run for ten years."

All of the big investment and unit trust groups now offer regular savings plans. The standard minimum is £50 a month, but some have limits as low as £10 a month. And, if you are temporarily out of work or financially strapped, you can interrupt payments until you can comfortably part with the cash again.

There are sound financial reasons to make monthly stock market investments rather than buying into a fund with a large lump-sum payment. At the moment, world markets are particularly erratic and monthly investments tend to iron out the impact of market volatility over the long term. In addition, should the market suddenly crash, investors can take the opportunity to buy at the lower market levels by making a one-off payment into the fund.

One potential problem with regular savings into a unit or investment trust fund is that the tax liabilities could be horrendous if you hold on to the investment for many years before selling. One way round this is to use a personal equity plan, which allows you to take the income and realise any gains free from tax.

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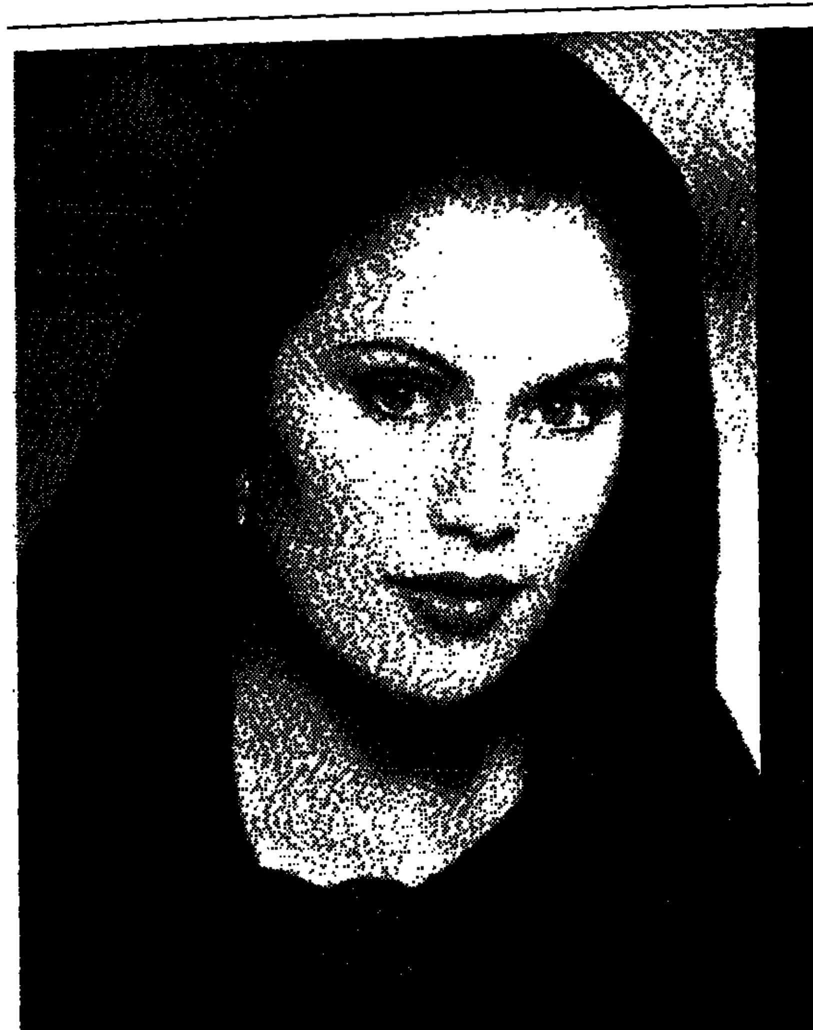

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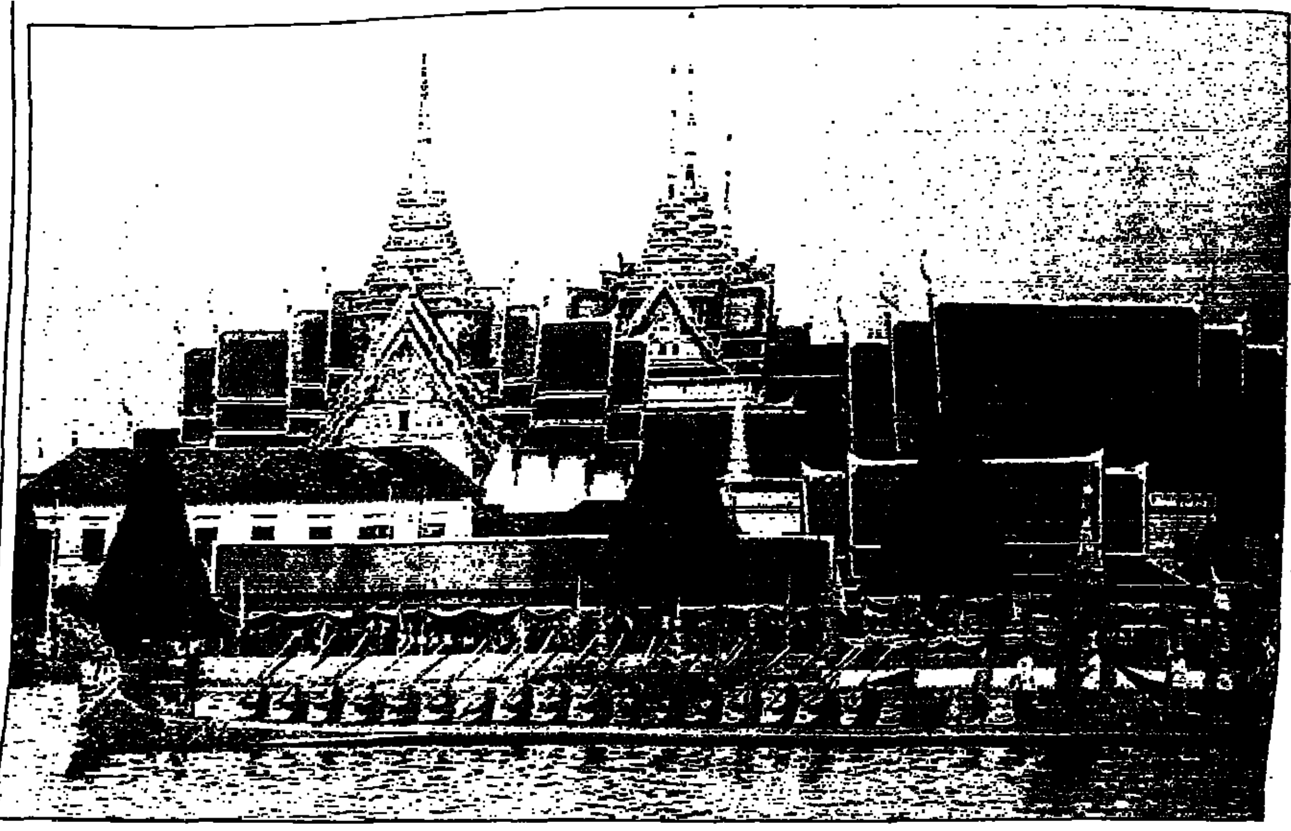

A two-week trip to Thailand, where you can see the Grand Palace in Bangkok, could cost up to £61.30 to insure

Tax adds to travel costs

Nathan Yates finds a direct insurer may offer the cheapest holiday cover

The new tax year is here, and with it an increase in duty on holiday insurance, which is raising prices just in time for the summer holidays. A rise of up to 15 per cent in insurance premium tax (IPT) paid by travel insurance brokers has already taken effect and the consumer is set to suffer as these extra costs are passed on to holidaymakers.

However, although the tax rise threatens to mar many travel deals, there are ways to reduce the impact of the levy. The increase in IPT comes at two different rates. The largest rise, from 2.5 per cent to 17.5 per cent, is levied on travel agents and tour operators. But direct insurers pay only an extra 1.5 percentage points, taking their total outlay to just 4 per cent.

Since deals from direct insurers were often better before the changes, the difference between direct policies and those provided by travel agents has grown. A survey by *The Times* shows that a two-week holiday with a leading travel company such as Thomas Cook will now cost £36.15 per person to insure if the destination is Spain and £61.30 if it is Thailand.

Insuring through a direct company can cut the cost to £25.95 for Spain with Europ Assistance and £13 with Columbus Direct. For Thailand, General Accident would charge £49.30 and Columbus Direct £27. The maximum saving per person of £23.15 on the short-haul trip and £34.30 on the long-haul break is even more noticeable when insuring a whole family.

Julie Philpott, of Columbus Direct, says: "The premium tax increase will make people realise that they need to shop around to get the right cover for the right price. Although the tax increase has also been imposed on us by the Government, the price difference is small because our prices are so much lower. It's the travel agents who have been stung."

Those buying holidays in a package from a travel agent may be told they cannot benefit from switching to direct insurance. Many travel agents offer discounts on their holidays to those buying their insurance policies, and others provide insurance free as part of their package.

These offers may seem like another way to beat the tax rise, but travellers opting for package deals should be warned that there are potential pitfalls. Once the agent's insurance is added on, customers can find that their discounted holiday is less attractive than it seemed.

Thomas Cook is currently offering two-week holidays in Thailand for a family of three with Sunworld, the tour operator, at £1,526.85 — a discount of 10 per cent. But when the insurance cost of £171.64 is added, the final figure of £1,698.49 is less appealing.

Conversely, those lured by free insurance offers can find that the gift is clawed back by the removal of discounts on the holiday. Lunn Poly is offering free insurance on any holiday costing more than £299. However, even with this deal, a two-week Sunworld holiday in Thailand for a family of three costs £1,887. This is more than Thomas Cook's price because, although the insurance is free, there is no discount.

The only way to minimise the slice of IPT rise on a package deal is to compare the total cost of your holiday with different companies. Customers should ask for the price including discount and insurance to make sure they are not hoodwinked.

Another way to reduce the impact of the tax rise is to buy an annual travel policy. These are good value for frequent travellers. Three two-week holidays to Thailand would cost as much as £181.90 to insure with Thomas Cook, but an annual global policy can be as little as £72.30 with Direct Line, a saving of £111.60.

One thing is certain, the low prices will not last for ever. Although most insurance companies will absorb the effects of the IPT rise in the short term, it is inevitable that costs will eventually be passed on to customers. Grant Clow, spokesman for Direct Travel, says: "Prices will undoubtedly go up in the future. We're already considering reviewing our prices."

Europ Assistance have guaranteed its January 1 rates until the end of the year but will not speculate beyond that; and General Accident is reviewing its contracts on May 1.

Additional research by Darren Caplan

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Europ Assistance	£25.95	n/a	£145.00	£95.00
Columbus Direct	£13.00	£27.00	£89.75	n/a
General Accident	£18.50	£49.30	£79.00	n/a
Thomas Cook	£36.15	£61.30	n/a	n/a
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Group health insurance can have its drawbacks, **Helen Pridham** discovers

Who pays for an accident at work?

A big drawback of workplace health insurance schemes has been highlighted by a reader's struggle to get a hearing of her claim for long-term sick pay from her employer's group permanent health insurance scheme.

The problem is that employees have no right to challenge directly any decision of the insurance company providing the benefit and there is no independent adjudicator to whom they can turn for help if their claim is disputed.

Unbeknown to most employees, they are not entitled to go to the Insurance Ombudsman for help if such a dispute arises. Going through the courts to get redress is a lengthy, potentially very expensive and daunting prospect and can lead you up a blind alley as Heather Dilley, a reader, found. What is more, if you lose your job before a claim is resolved, you could also lose out on the chance to pursue your claim for benefits from the insurance company.

Yet, on the face of it, group permanent health insurance (PHI) provided by your employer is a very attractive company benefit. It is designed to pay you a replacement income in the event of long-term illness.

With state benefit now much reduced, such a scheme is clearly welcomed by most employees. It is advantageous for employers too, because it helps them to recruit and retain good people. They are spared the financial burden of supporting an employee suffering long-term ill-health and so they can afford to employ a replacement until the original employee recovers.

It is estimated that about 60 per cent of people covered by PHI come under these group policies, while 40 per cent have individual policies. However, while the protection under a group scheme may be similar or better, an individual's rights are very different.

The problem arises because the contract for cover is between the employer and the insurer and the benefits are regarded as part of the employee's contract of employment. Most employees, however, believe that they have a direct relationship with the insurance company. According to Stuart Gordon, a director of Sedgwick Noble Lowndes, the insurance broker, which helps employers to set up such schemes: "A fair number of disputes do arise on group PHI policies and employers will often take up the cudgels on their employee's behalf if they believe they have a legitimate claim and may even pay for further medical evidence.

"We will sometimes assist them in drawing up proper job descriptions so that doctors can see exactly what is expected of the employee."

Where claims are not successful, complainants have often approached the Insurance Ombudsman. He usually has to turn them away. His jurisdiction covers individual policies and he can only deal with complaints about group policies if the insurance companies agree.

Most companies have not been prepared to accept his jurisdiction over group policies. Nick Lomas, of UNUM, the largest of the group PHI insurers with 35 per cent of the UK market, said: "Group PHI benefits are covered contracts of employment. The Ombudsman may be an expert on insurance matters but not on employment law or industrial relations, so disputes about these benefits fall outside his jurisdiction."

Mr Lomas said UNUM has its own appeals procedure, although he was unable to say what proportion of claims go to appeal or, of those which do, how many succeed. If a claim is still rejected, the only option left to claimants is legal action. But not against UNUM, Ms Dilly discovered. They must sue their employers with UNUM as third-named defendants.

Royal & SunAlliance, the second-largest provider of group PHI policies, has an arbitration clause in its contracts that allows for the appointment of two independent arbitrators, one chosen by the insurer and the other by the policyholder. The arbitrators in turn have the power to appoint a third arbitrator or umpire if necessary.

Mike Warr, Royal & SunAlliance divisional manager, says: "We recognised that with PHI you can have one doctor with one opinion and one with another. We didn't want to end up engaged in long legal battles, with all the bad press that involves, so we inserted this arbitration clause when the policy was introduced in 1975. We felt it would be speedier and fairer."

Walter Merricks, the Insurance Ombudsman, acknowledges that there is considerable confusion among employees. He urges staff representatives to look carefully at existing arrangements: "They will probably find employees haven't got as many rights as they think they have." They needed to talk the matter through with their employer and agree on a proper disputes procedure.

"It would be a pleasing development if all employers and insurers would build into their contracts a right for the employee to have his claim adjudicated," Mr Merricks says.

MIKE WALKER

Heather Dilley was awarded industrial injury benefit

CASE STUDY

HEATHER DILLEY, 51, of Southsea, was employed as a medical representative until 1992 when a back injury at work incapacitated her.

Her employer put forward a claim to UNUM, its insurance company, for PHI benefit. The claim was refused. Her employer appealed but this was also turned down.

In the meantime, the Industrial Injuries Board ruled that Miss Dilley had suffered an industrial injury and granted her industrial injury benefit, which she now gets along with incapacity benefit and the disability living allowance.

Unhappy with the insurance company's refusal of her claim, when Ms Dilley discovered she had no access to the Insurance Ombudsman she took legal advice and proceeded with an action against the insurance company.

After nearly five years Ms Dilley's case came to court last month. UNUM successfully argued that its contract was not with her, but with her employer. The case was dismissed and medical evidence in her favour was not heard.

She had hoped to appeal, but further legal aid has been refused. She is now considering legal action against her employer. "I would like other employees to know just how difficult it is to enforce their rights against insurance companies. I think most people in group PHI schemes simply assume their claims will go through without a hitch," Ms Dilley says.

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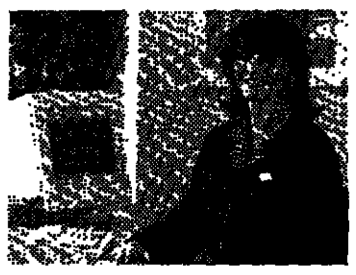

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THE TIMES MONEY INFORMATION SERVICE

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PENSIONERS are missing out on a slice of the £800 million of unclaimed Income Support and £810 million of housing and council tax benefits each year, according to the latest statistics from the Department of Social Security.

More than one million people aged over 60 could get extra help with housing costs and council tax, explains Help the Aged in its booklet *Can You Claim It?*, which has been updated for 1997. For a free copy, send a SAE to Help the Aged Benefits Information Unit, St James's Walk, Clerkenwell Green, London EC1R 0BE.

■ Cheshire Building Society is launching an offshore instant access account available to UK investors and expatriates from Monday. Cheshire Guernsey offers instant access without penalty, no charges for postal withdrawals and tiered gross rates of 6.10 per cent (£10,000+), 6.30 per cent (£25,000+), 6.55 per cent (£50,000+), 6.65 per cent (£100,000+) and 6.75 per cent (£250,000+). Maximum investment is £1 million. Call 01481 726 885 for more information.

■ Citibank has introduced a pc banking service. Direct Access, which allows customers to undertake a range of banking transactions from their computer using a lap-top and modem. The system allows online transactions to be recorded immediately and customers can print statements, order chequebooks and pay bills. Direct Access is free to UK Citibank account holders, entailing no cost beyond telephone calls. Your monthly credit balance must remain consistently higher than £2,000. Computers will need to be IBM-compatible with 20MB disk space. Free demonstration discs are available by calling 0800 008800.

■ The Stock Exchange has published an easy-to-read guide for private shareholders which seeks to demystify share ownership. The guide provides information on how to save through the stock market, explaining the mechanics of share dealing, tax, investor protection plus a section on first-time shareholders. Copies of *Share Ownership for All* and *Being a Shareholder* (initial questions answered) are available free of charge from the Stock Exchange on 0171 797 1372.

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NOTICE ACCOUNTS & BONDS	Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
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Northern Rock BS 0500 505000	Select 60	60 day p	£25,000	6.70	Yly
Scarborough BS 0800 590578	Scarborough 100	100 day	£1,000	6.30	Yly
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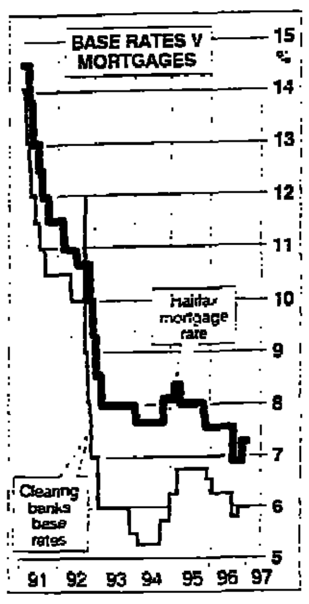
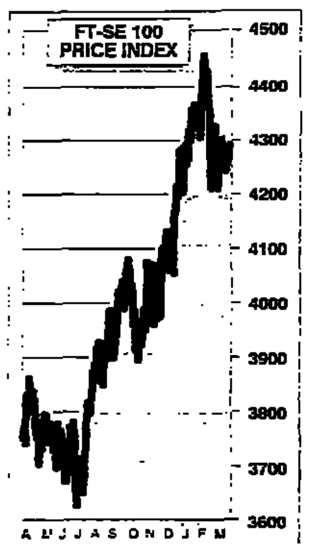




NATIONAL SAVINGS

	Gross rate	At tax rates 20%	40%	Min/maximum investmnt £	Notice	Contact
Ordinary A/c¹	1.50	1.20	0.90	10-10,000**		0645 645000
Investment A/c*	4.75	3.80	2.85	20-500***	1mth	0645 645000
Income Bond*	6.00	4.80	3.60	2,000-25,000**	3mth	0645 645000
First Opt Bond	6.00	4.80	3.60	1,000-20,000**		0645 645000
44th Issue Certt	5.35			100-10,000	8day	0645 645000
Children's Bond†	6.75			25-1,000	1mth	0645 645000
Gen Ext Rate	3.51					0645 645000
Capital Bond	6.65	5.32	3.99	100-250,000	8day	0645 645000
10th Index Linked†	2.50			100-10,000	8day	0645 645000
Pensnrs Bond S3	7.00	5.60	4.20	500-50,000	60day	0645 645000

¹ First £70 (£140 jt) of int tax free, [illegible] for up to £100 [illegible] Unlimited additional holdings for reinvested proceeds. † Tax free. *Rates gross [illegible] Guaranteed when held for 5 years [illegible] Taxable but [illegible] net bonus for £20,000+ (£100,000 [illegible]) [illegible] earn higher rates **Tiered rates apply

PENSION ANNUITIES

All figures are the gross annual annuity (£100,000 purchase), guaranteed 5 years, paid monthly in advance

SINGLE LIFE (level ann)	Male: Age 60	Age 65	Age 70
Generali ....Level	£9,880	£10,916	£12,264
Canada Life..........Level	£9,792	£10,870	£12,340
Sun Lf of Can.........Level	£9,806	£10,847	£12,269
Standard Lf..........Level	£9,776	£10,844	£12,248
Equitable Lf..........Level	£9,905	£10,824	£12,027

SINGLE LIFE	Female: Age 60	Age 65	Age 70
Prudential ....Level	£9,237	£10,036	£11,214
Canada Life ....Level	£9,096	£9,901	£11,083
Generali ....Level	£8,987	£9,839	£11,018
Sun Lf of Can.........Level	£9,066	£9,806	£10,896
Equitable Lf..........Level	£8,971	£9,658	£10,617

JOINT LIFE, 2/3 WIDOWS (level annuity)	Male: Age 60 / Female: Age 55	Age 65 / Age 60	Age 70 / Age 65
Generali ....Level	£8,664	£9,289	£10,150
Canada Life ....Level	£8,671	£9,287	£10,163
Sun Lf of Can.........Level	£8,690	£9,264	£10,083
Prudential ....Level	£8,726	£9,217	£9,951
Equitable Lf..........Level	£8,660	£9,186	£9,910

Source: Annuity Direct (0171 588 9393)

Statistics compiled by Lizahne Rose

GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS

ANNUAL INCOME

Rates as at April 19, 1997

	Investment (£)	Company	Standard Rate (%)
1 Year			
	5,000	AIG Life (UK)	5.75
	10,000	AIG Life (UK)	5.95
	20,000	AIG Life (UK)	6.05
	50,000	AIG Life (UK)	6.15
2 Years			
	1,000	Hambro Assured	5.15
	10,000	AIG Life (UK)	6.15
	20,000	AIG Life (UK)	6.25
	50,000	AIG Life (UK)	6.35
3 Years			
	1,000	Hambro Assured	5.65
	10,000	AIG Life (UK)	6.38
	20,000	AIG Life (UK)	6.53
	50,000	AIG Life (UK)	6.58
4 Years			
	1,000	Hambro Assured	6.10
	3,000	ITT London & Edin	6.35
5 Years			
	1,000	Hambro Assured	6.15
	3,000	ITT London & Edin	7.00

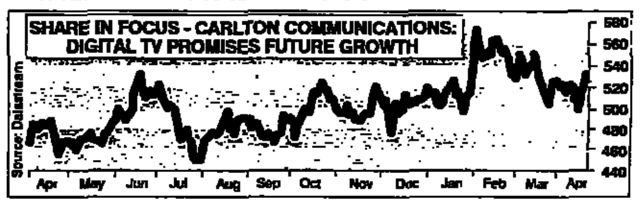
Source. Chamberlain de Broë 0171-434 4222. Net rates. Income and capital guaranteed. Early surrender. Terms vary. Monthly income may be available.

PIBS

FIXED RATE	Gross coupon	Buying price	% Gross yield	Issue price	Minimum purchase amount
Birmingham Midshires	9.375%	105.16	8.900	100.17	1,000
Bradford & Bingley	11.625%	129.42	8.983	100.13	10,000
Bradford & Bingley	13.000%	144.80	8.978	100.20	10,000
Bristol & West	13.375%	149.61	8.940	100.34	1,000
Britannia	13.000%	144.96	8.968	100.42	1,000
Coventry	12.125%	135.94	8.885	100.75	1,000
First National	11.750%	128.54	9.141	100.25	10,000
Halifax	8.750%	101.50	8.621	100.62	50,000
Halifax	12.000%	135.63	8.518	100.28	50,000
Halifax	13.625%	156.56	8.703	100.00	50,000
Leeds & Holbeck	13.375%	149.94	8.920	100.23	1,000
Newcastle	10.750%	121.37	8.839	100.32	1,000
Newcastle	12.625%	141.58	8.917	100.45	1,000
Northern Rock	12.625%	143.49	8.799	100.14	1,000
Skipton	12.875%	144.69	8.898	100.48	1,000

FLOATING RATE	Gross coupon	Buying price	Issue price	Minimum purchase
Cheshire (30/09-27/03)	9.04063%	112.00	100.00	1,000
First Nat(22/09-20/03)	9.12031%	101.00	100.00	1,000

PIBS = Permanent interest-bearing shares
Source: ABN AMRO Hoare Govett — 0171 601 0101



LARGER LENDERS

Lender	Interest rate %	Loan size	Max %	Notes
Building Societies				
Alliance & Leic 0800 412214	4.25	to £250k	90	3% discount until 1.5.98
Woolwich Local Branch	4.29	£20-200k	50	3% disc 12 mths plus 3% cashbk
Nationwide 0800 302010	4.39	£150-300k	90	2.60% discount for 1 year
Banks				
Bank of Ireland 0118 9510100	0.99	£20-145k	95	6.50% disc for 6 mths, 3%-6 mths
Royal Bank of Scot 0800 121121	4.25	£150-250k	90	3% discount until 1.10.97

LARGER LOANS

Lender	Interest rate %	Loan size	Max %	Notes
Building Societies				
Scarborough 0800 590547	0.25	£30-100k	95	6.99% disc-6mth 2%-6mth,0.5%-1y
Nottingham Imper. 0115 9817220	0.75	£25-150k	75	Fixed at 0.75% until 31.1.98
Universal 0191 232 0973	1.24	£20-150k	95	6% discount until 1.7.98
Banks				
Bank of Ireland 0118 9510100	0.99	£20-145k	95	6.50% disc-6mth 3% disc-6mth
Midland 0800 494999	4.15	£50-£99,999	95	3% discount for 1 year

FIRST-TIME BUYERS

Lender	Interest rate %	Loan size	Max %	Notes
Building Societies				
Bristol & West 0800 119955	4.99	£15k+	95	Rate fixed until 1.3.98
Newbury 01635 43676	3.99	£15-150k	95	Rate shown after 3% disc for 1 yr
Halifax 01422 333333	4.25	no min/max	95	3% discount until 31.5.99
Banks				
Bank of Ireland 0118 9510100	0.99	£20-145k	95	6.50% disc 6 mths 3% disc 6 mths
Abbey National 01908 343400	4.89	to £125k	95	Rate fixed until 31.7.99

Larger lenders, loans and first-time buyers tables by Blay's Guides Ltd (01753 880482)

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UNIT-LINKED INSURANCE INVESTMENTS

	Bid	Offer	Wkly +/-	Yld %
AEGON LIFE ASSURANCE				
Edinburgh Park, Edinburgh, EH12 9SE				
0131 339 9191				
Balanced	537.30	566.60	- 2.20	...
UK Equity	726.00	768.30	- 5.30	..
Property	428.30	451.30	+ 0.40	..
Fixed Interest	362.90	384.10	- 1.70	..
Money	273.30	289.90	+ 0.20	...
International	413.20	437.30	...	...
ABBEY LIFE				
Holdenhurst Road, Bournemouth BH8 8AL				
01202 292373				
Custodian S4	199.90	210.40	+ 0.70	...
Ethical S4	171.00	180.00	- 0.90	..
International S4	217.40	228.90	- 0.10	..
Protected Gth S4	127.00	133.70	+ 0.40	..
Asian Pacific	203.80	214.60	- 2.20	..
European S4	226.30	238.30	- 2.00	..
Prop Fd Ser 4	412.70	434.50	+ 0.30	..
Equity Ser 4	287.90	303.10	- 0.20	..
Man Ser 4	806.70	849.20	...	0
Com Ser 4	359.10	378.00	- 0.30	..
Money Ser 4	358.70	377.60	+ 0.30	..
Fixed Int Ser 4	405.20	426.60	- 2.70	..
American Ser 4	680.20	716.10	- 5.10	...
High Inc Ser 4	876.40	922.60	- 0.10	..
Indexed Inv Ser 4	233.00	245.30	+ 1.10	..
Japan Ser 4	271.20	285.50	+ 6.60	...
ALBANY LIFE				
3 Darkes Lane, Potters Bar EN6 1AJ				
01707 42311				
Equity Fd Acc	2032.30	2139.10	-11.60	...
European Fd Acc	503.80	530.30	- 5.70	..
Fixed Int Acc	579.60	610.10	+ 3.00	..
Gtd Money Acc	365.30	384.50	- 0.30	..
Intl Managed Acc	740.30	779.20	- 4.40	..
Int Fxd Int Acc	365.70	384.90	- 0.20	..
Japan Fund	215.40	226.70	- 3.60	..
N American Acc	422.90	445.00	- 6.60	..
Prop Fd Acc	488.60	514.30	+ 0.60	
Multiple Inv Acc	1260.30	1326.60	- 5.60	..
ALLIED DUNBAR ASSURANCE				
Swindon SN1 1EL				
01793 514514				
Fxd Int Dep Acc	409.90	431.50	+ 0.20	...
Equity Acc	1776.40	1869.90	+ 0.70	..
Property Acc	677.70	713.40	+ 0.60	...
Far East Acc	312.90	329.40	+ 0.40	...
Managed Capital	626.80	659.80	+ 0.60	...
-do- Acc	1352.00	1423.20	+ 1.70	...
Overseas Acc	1263.20	1329.70	+ 3.90	..
Gilt Edged Acc	565.30	595.10	+ 3.10	..
Amer Equity Acc	1142.10	1202.30	- 9.80	...
Amer Man Acc	477.40	502.60	- 3.80	..
Amer Prop Acc	118.00	124.20	- 0.90	...
Distribution Bonds	25.60	27.00	+ 0.10	...
AXA EQUITY & LAW LIFE ASSURANCE				
Amersham Road, High Wycombe, Bucks				
01494 463463				
Reserve Ser 6	180.80	190.30	+ 0.50	...
Balncd Ser 6	887.30	934.00	- 2.20	...
Opportunity Ser 6	202.60	213.20	- 1.00	...
Distribution Ser 6	106.10	111.60	+ 0.20	6.55
UK Equities Ser 6	£13.26	£13.95	- 4.00	...
Higher Inc Ser 6	£13.66	£14.37	- 3.60	.
North Amer Ser 6	568.40	598.30	- 5.70	...
Far East Ser 6	537.30	565.50	+ 0.40	...
Europe Ser 6	510.70	537.50	- 3.90	..
Intnl Ser 6	665.00	699.90	- 3.20	...
Property Ser 6	617.90	650.40	+ 0.80	...
Fixed Int Ser 6	501.80	528.20	+ 1.80	.
Ind-Lnkd Sec S6	203.30	213.90	+ 0.50	...
Gteed Dep Ser 6	326.70	343.80	+ 0.30	...
BARCLAYS LIFE				
252 Romford Road, London E7 9JB				
0181 534 5544				
Equity Acc	1134.50	1194.30	- 4.00	..
-do- Initial	690.60	727.00	- 2.40	...
Gilt Edged Acc	450.30	474.10	+ 3.60	..
-do- Initial	276.50	291.10	+ 2.20	...
International Acc	453.90	477.80	- 0.80	...
-do- Initial	276.90	291.50	- 0.50	...
Managed Acc	652.00	686.40	- 0.90	...
-do- Initial	399.10	420.20	- 0.60	...
Money Acc	318.80	335.60	+ 0.30	...
Property Acc	326.30	343.50	+ 0.30	...
-do- Initial	198.80	209.30	...	...
America Acc	391.60	412.30	- 0.60	...
Far East Gwth	256.30	269.80	- 0.50	..
Financial Acc	499.40	525.70	- 1.60	...
500 Accum	547.70	576.60	- 2.10	..
Japan Acc	214.70	226.00	+ 6.70	...
Income Acc	672.50	707.90	- 1.90	...
Leisure Acc	335.90	353.60	- 2.30	...
Special Sits Acc	344.40	362.60	- 2.00	..
Univ Tech Acc	187.10	197.00	- 0.20	...
BLACK HORSE LIFE				
Mountbatten House, Chatham, Kent ME4 4JF				
01634 834000				
The Managed Fd	982.65	982.65	- 0.03	..
Income Fund	946.40	996.22	- 4.35	...
Extra Income	855.93	900.98	- 1.69	...
Worldwide Gth	551.31	580.33	+ 0.59	...
Balanced Fund	845.61	890.12	+ 0.53	...
Smllr Cos Recov	£11.00	£11.57	+ 4.19	..
N Amer & Genrl	471.17	495.97	- 4.30	...
Pacific Basin	416.32	438.24	- 4.64	..
German Growth	282.45	297.32	- 0.03	...
Japan Growth	143.89	151.47	+ 2.80	..
The UK Gth Fd	274.42	288.87	- 0.07	...
Contl Euro Gth	177.08	186.40	- 0.95	...
Property Fund	432.48	455.25	+ 0.10	...
Fixed Interest	374.89	394.63	+ 4.07	...
Cash Fund	309.80	326.11	+ 0.24	...
Managed Inv	585.46	616.28	- 0.09	...
Nth Amer Recov	287.96	303.02	- 7.01	...
Altrust Fund				
Managed Grth	534.61	568.02	+ 0.24	..
BRITANNIA				
50 Bothwell St, Glasgow G2 6HR				
0141 248 2000				
Measured Perf	207.50	219.50	+ 1.20	...
Performance Plus	233.40	246.90	- 1.40	...
With Profit Perf	192.20	203.30	+ 0.20	...
UK Opportunity	269.70	285.30	+ 2.30	...
Euro Opportunity	285.60	302.20	- 1.60	
North Amer Opp	241.00	255.00	- 4.10	...
Far East Opp	203.80	215.60	+ 2.40	...
Gwth Prop Ser 1	182.50	192.10	...	...
Gth Prop Ser 2	215.50	228.10	+ 0.20	...
Fixed Int	234.00	247.50	+ 2.10	..
Cash	173.30	183.20	+ 0.10	6.49
Overseas	269.00	284.60	- 1.60	..
Formerly LAS				
Managed Fund	434.60	457.50	- 2.50	..
UK Equity	815.90	858.90	+ 6.40	..
Property	297.50	313.20	+ 0.20	...
Money Market	274.60	289.10	+ 0.30	...
Fixed Interest	339.90	357.80	+ 3.10	...
Japan	288.30	303.50	- 5.10	...
North America	214.50	225.80	- 3.60	...
International	415.60	437.50	- 2.50	...
European	365.20	384.50	- 2.10	..
Far East	150.90	158.90	+ 1.80	...
CANADA LIFE				
26 High Street, Potters Bar, Herts EN6 5BA				
01707 51122				
Managed	406.00	427.40	- 0.20	.
Property	283.10	298.00	+ 0.10	..
Gilt & Fxd Int	275.70	290.30	+ 2.30	..
Equity	494.00	520.10	- 2.40	...
Cash	233.70	246.00	+ 0.20	...
CLife Euro Mgd	468.20	492.90	+ 0.60	...
CLife Intl Fd	374.20	393.90	+ 2.60	...
Managed Fund	866.90	912.50	- 0.30	...
Property Fund	568.90	598.80	+ 0.70	...
Equity Fund	1219.30	1283.50	- 5.80	...
Gilt Edged Fd	711.50	748.90	+ 5.90	...
Deposit Fund	362.10	381.20	+ 0.30	...
Investment Fd	537.30	564.10	- 2.90	...
International	595.60	626.90	+ 4.40	...
CITY OF WESTMINSTER ASSURANCE				
Sentry House, 500 Avebury Blvd,				
Milton Keynes MK9 2NU. 01908 606101				
Property Fund	175.30	184.60	...	...
Managed Fund	779.30	820.40	+ 1.90	...
Equity Fund	470.40	495.20	- 0.30	...
CLERICAL MEDICAL/FIDELITY INVESTMENTS				
Narrow Plain, Bristol BS2 0JH. 0117 9290566				
Assurance Funds				
Sapphire Mixed	350.00	368.50	- 0.20	...
Ruby	200.90	211.50	+ 0.60	...
Emerald	162.10	170.70	+ 0.60	...
Equity	424.70	447.10	- 1.50	...
Property	245.00	257.90	+ 0.10	...
Gilt & Fixed Int	235.50	247.90	+ 1.30	...
Indexed Secs	186.50	196.40	+ 0.60	...
Cash	204.10	214.90	+ 0.20	...
Nth American	306.30	322.50	- 3.10	...
Far East	272.70	287.10	+ 4.80	...
International	273.10	287.50	+ 0.60	...
Special Sits	468.20	492.90	- 0.90	...
Intl Income	379.10	399.10	- 0.60	...
European	428.90	451.50	- 1.30	...
Japanese	103.90	109.40	+ 4.00	...
SE Asia	397.00	417.90	- 3.00	...
With Profits Reg	190.60	200.70	+ 0.30	...
-do- Spec	190.60	200.70	+ 0.30	...
Flexible Retirement Plans Funds				
Mixed	416.10	438.10	- 0.50	...
Equity	538.40	566.80	- 1.70	...
Property	230.80	243.00	+ 0.20	...
Gilt & Fixed Int	306.90	323.10	+ 3.00	...
Index Linked	200.60	211.20	+ 0.90	...
Cash	280.70	295.50	+ 0.30	...
Nth American	384.20	404.50	- 4.90	...
Far East Acc	283.20	298.20	+ 5.00	...
International Acc	347.40	365.70	- 2.30	...
Special Sits	717.50	755.30	...	...
European Flex	630.70	663.90	- 1.50	...
COLONIAL MUTUAL GROUP				
Colonial Mutual House, Chatham Maritime,				
Kent ME4 4YY. 01634 890 000				
(Units): Key ‡	249.06	...	...	...
-do- Pacemaker ‡	384.74		...	...
-do- Cash	219.87	231.44	...	..
-do- Equity	688.96	725.22	...	..
-do- Fxd Int	415.26	437.14	...	...
-do- Managed	489.71	515.48	...	...
-do- Property	367.86	387.22	...	..
(Pens): Cash Cap	216.07	227.45	.	.
-do- Cash Inv	343.47	361.55	..	...
-do- Equity Cap	£18.11	£19.07	...	..
-do- Equity Inv	£28.79	£30.31	...	...
-do- Fixed Cap	444.98	468.41	..	...
-do- Fixed Inv	707.33	744.57	...	...
-do- Index Cap	212.26	223.44	...	...
-do- Index Inv	337.41	355.17	...	...
-do- Mngd Cap	712.27	749.77	...	..
-do- Mngd Inv	£11.32	£11.91	...	...
COMMERCIAL UNION				
St Helen's, 1 Undershaft, EC3 0171 283 7500				
Var Ann Acc (5) ‡	989.38	...	- 2.34	...
Var Ann (5) ‡	113.12	...	- 0.26	...
Prime: Managed	490.20	516.10	+ 1.60	..
Prime: UK Equity	638.30	671.90	+ 1.10	...
Prime: Int Equity	333.40	351.00	+ 2.10	...
Prime: Property	255.40	268.90	+ 0.50	...
Prime: Fxd Int	266.50	280.60	+ 1.80	..
Prime Index-Lnk	188.60	198.60	+ 1.00	...
Prime: Cash	224.60	236.50	+ 0.20	...
CONFEDERATION LIFE				
Lytton Way, Stevenage, Herts SG1 2NN				
01438 744840				
Managed Fund	1344.10	1414.80	+12.30	...
Equity II	2020.00	2126.30	+26.60	...
For Crown see Windsor				
EAGLE STAR LIFE ASSURANCE				
Montpellier Drive, Cheltenham, GL53 7LQ.				
01242 221311				
Life Funds				
Ut Wth Pfts (566) ‡	113.00	..	+ 0.20	...
Secure (2) ‡	108.40	.	+ 0.20	...
Managed (3) ‡	119.50	...	+ 0.30	...
Equity Mngd (3) ‡	119.40	...	+ 0.40	..
Adventurous (3) ‡	110.80	...	- 0.70	...
Bristol & West (2) ‡	109.60	...	+ 0.10	..
Equity Mgd S1	292.10	307.50	+ 1.00	..
Managed S1	291.50	306.90	+ 0.80	...
Adventurous S1	230.50	242.70	+ 1.50	...
Managed (2)	196.40	206.80	+ 0.50	...
Pension Funds				
Unit With Pfts (5) ‡	112.40		+ 0.20	...
Secure (2) ‡	108.40	...	+ 0.10	...
Managed (2) ‡	116.70	...	+ 0.40	...
Equity Mngd (2) ‡	117.60	...	+ 0.40	
Adventurous (2) ‡	108.70	...	+ 0.90	...
Bristol & West (2) ‡	109.70	...	+ 0.20	...
EAGLE STAR/MIDLAND				
60 St Mary Axe, London EC3. 0171 929 1111				
Eagle/Mid Uts	378.40	392.10	- 1.40	0.01
FRIENDS' PROVIDENT				
Castle Street, Salisbury, Wilts SP1 3SH				
01722 413366				
Managed	384.50	404.80	- 0.40	...
UK Equity	537.80	566.20	- 1.80	
Stewardship	485.80	511.40	+ 0.40	...
Overseas Equity	348.90	367.30	- 0.10	...
North American	206.90	217.80	- 0.10	...
Pacific Basin	169.70	178.70	- 0.50	...
European	335.10	352.80	- 1.70	...
Property	188.90	198.90	+ 0.20	...
Fixed Interest	277.40	292.00	+ 1.50	...
Index Linked	189.10	199.10	+ 1.10	...
Cash	220.10	231.70	+ 0.10	...
FP Life Assurance ex NM				
Fixed Interest	614.00	646.30	+ 5.10	...
Managed	855.20	900.20	- 1.30	...
Deposit	376.20	396.00	+ 0.40	.
Property	538.10	566.40	+ 0.80	...
American	565.40	595.10	+ 0.60	...
Australian	672.60	708.00	- 2.80	...
European	782.80	824.00	- 4.70	...
Income Acc	953.10	1003.20	- 2.10	...
-do- Dist	524.20	551.80	- 1.40	4.95
International	364.60	383.70	+ 0.10	...
Japan Smaller	317.00	333.60	- 6.10	...
Singapore & Mal	426.00	448.40	- 5.00	...
Smaller Cos	535.40	563.50	- 1.90	...
Tokyo Fund	531.30	559.20	+ 6.30	...
UK Equity	741.10	780.10	- 2.60	...
CCM Vangd Mg	911.10	959.00	- 2.00	...
GT GLOBAL FUND MGMT LTD				
Alban Gate, 14th Flr, 125 London Wall, Lond				
EC2Y 5AS. 0171 710 4567				
GT Plan Far East	311.20	327.60	- 3.60	...
GT Plan Wwide	563.40	593.10	- 1.30	...
GAN LIFE & PENSIONS				
Gan House, Harlow, Essex				
CM20 2EW. 01279 626262				
Portfolio Acc	802.30	802.30	- 2.70	...
-do- Inv A	802.20	844.50	- 2.80	..
UK Equity	520.80	548.30	- 2.40	...
Gilt Plus	229.10	241.20	+ 1.20	...
Managed	364.00	383.20	- 1.20	...
GENERAL ACCIDENT				
2 Rougier St, York YO1 1HR. 01904 628982				
Managed	256.70	270.10	- 0.20	.
Unitised Profit	161.70	170.20	+ 0.20	...
UK Equity	379.40	399.30	- 0.70	...
Fixed Int	222.50	234.10	+ 1.50	...
Index-Linked	183.90	193.50	+ 0.60	...
Cash Deposit	190.00	199.90	+ 0.20	..
Property	184.00	193.60	+ 0.30	..
International	203.90	214.50	- 1.00	...
American	224.00	235.70	- 0.10	...
Japan	192.80	202.90	+ 3.40	..
Japan Smllr Cos	197.50	207.70	+ 3.40	...
European	226.40	238.30	- 0.60	...
Pacific Fund	305.20	321.10	- 3.50	...
Conv Life	161.80	170.20	+ 0.10	..
Formerly Provident Mutual				
Managed Ord	585.90	616.70	- 0.50	...
Managed Initial	365.80	385.10	- 0.40	...
Equity Ord	958.80	1009.30	- 1.80	..
Equity Init	598.60	630.10	- 1.50	...
I-Linked Gilt Ord	224.20	236.00	+ 0.90	...
I-Linked Gilt Init	146.20	153.90	+ 0.50	...
Oseas Equity Ord	431.50	454.20	- 0.20	...
Oseas Equity Init	269.40	283.60	- 0.30	...
Property Ord	285.70	300.70	+ 0.50	...
Property Init	178.40	187.80	+ 0.20	...
Fixed Int Ord	325.20	342.30	+ 2.20	...
Fixed Int Init	203.00	213.70	+ 1.20	...
Deposit Ord	226.50	238.40	+ 0.20	...
Deposit Initial	141.40	148.80	...	..
GUARDIAN ROYAL EXCHANGE				
Royal Exchange London EC3. 0171 283 7101				
Ass Prop Bds	896	933.30	...	...
Managed Initial	552.80	581.90	- 2.00	...
-do- Acc	831.40	875.20	- 2.60	...
Equity Initial	900.20	947.60	- 3.90	...
-do- Acc	1353.90	1425.20	- 4.60	...
Fixed Int Initial	478.60	503.80	+ 2.80	...
-do- Acc	719.90	757.70	+ 4.50	...
Intl Initial	493	518.90	- 4.80	...
-do- Acc	741.50	780.50	- 6.80	...
Nth Amer Initial	243.60	256.40	- 3.20	...
-do- Acc	333.40	351	- 4.20	...
Pacific Initial	203.10	213.80	- 2.10	...
-do- Acc	375.30	399.80	- 2.80	...
Property Initial	186.40	196.20	...	...
-do- Acc	280	294.70	...	...
Index-Linkd Initl	169.70	178.60	+ 0.70	...
-do- Acc	232.30	244.50	+ 1.10	.
Deposit Initial	206.20	217	...	...
-do- Acc	310.10	326.40	+ 0.20	.
Euro Initial	130.10	137	- 1.00	...
-do- Acc	164.60	173.30	- 1.20	...
HALIFAX LIFE LTD				
PO Box 285, York YO1 1YB 01904 611110				
Life Funds				
Foundation	31.24	32.88	+ 0.01	...
Balanced	31.06	32.69	+ 0.04	...
Opportunity	31.82	33.49	- 0.07	..
Deposit	25.88	27.24	+ 0.01	...
Pension Funds				
Foundation S2	23.95	25.21	- 0.01	...
Balanced S2	24.02	25.28	+ 0.04	...
Opportunity S2	23.70	24.95	- 0.04	...
Deposit S2	24.04	25.31	+ 0.04	...
HAMBRO ASSURED				
Harbour House, Portway, Preston, Lancs				
PR2 2PR. 01772 840000				
Managed	207.90	218.80	- 0.10	...
-do- Pens	267.50	281.50	- 0.30	..
UK Equity	226.40	238.30	...	...
-do- Pens	274.30	288.70	- 0.20	..
International	172.80	181.80	- 0.10	...
-do- Pens	191.90	201.90	+ 0.10	...
Deposit	152.00	160.00	+ 0.10	...
-do- Pens	185.30	195.00	- 0.20	...
HILL SAMUEL LIFE				
NLA Tower, Addiscombe Road, Croydon				
0181 686 4355				
Security Fund	708.60	749.90	- 5.00	..
British Fund	730.00	772.50	- 3.30	...
International	630.70	667.50	+ 0.50	...
Dollar Fund	552.40	584.60	- 2.50	...
Capital Fund	607.50	642.90	- 1.60	...
Income Fund	910.10	963.10	- 2.90	..
Property Series A	517.70	547.90	- 2.20	4.90
Property Units	862.20	905.40	+ 3.70	...
Financial Fund	850.10	899.60	- 5.50	..
Managed Ser A	673.50	712.70	- 0.70	..
Managed Units	1216.00	1280.00	- 1.20	...
High Yield Fund	813.90	861.30	- 3.40	..
Money Series A	317.20	335.70	+ 0.20	...
Money Units	424.30	446.70	+ 0.40	...
Equity Fund	778.00	823.30	- 1.90	..
Fixed Interest	428.10	453.10	+ 3.90	..
Indexed Secs	206.60	218.70	+ 1.60	..
European Fund	961.80	1017.80	- 7.20	...
Natural Res	305.50	323.30	- 2.40	...
Far East Fund	595.80	630.50	+ 1.00	...
Smaller Cos	691.60	731.90	+ 2.00	...
Special Sits	709.50	750.80	+ 1.80	...
Man Currency	284.70	301.30	- 0.10	...
Japanese Tech	256.20	271.20	- 2.00	...
US Smaller Cos	399.30	422.60	-13.20	...
Formerly Target Life Assurance Co Ltd				
Deposit	271.40	285.70	+ 0.20	...
Financial Ser 1	67.90	72.50	- 0.40	...
Fixed Interest	375.00	394.90	+ 2.00	...
Gold	79.20	83.50	- 1.00	...
Managed	741.10	780.20	- 0.80	...
Mngd Growth	232.80	245.20	- 0.50	
Mngd Opp	249.60	262.80	- 0.90	...
Property	381.30	401.30	...	...
Residential Prop	118.50	124.80	...	...
TSB American	321.40	338.40	- 0.90	...
TSB Brit Gwth	1146.70	1207.10	- 4.60	...
TSB European	358.00	376.90	- 2.40	...
TSB Income	528.50	556.40	- 3.50	.
TSB Intl	485.50	511.20	- 0.70	...
TSB Intl Inc	350.10	368.70	+ 0.10	...
TSB Pacific	429.60	452.40	+ 2.30	..
TSB Prem Inc	326.40	341.00	+ 2.80	...
IRISH LIFE ASSURANCE				
Irish Life Centre, Victoria Street, St Albans,				
Herts AL1 5TF. 01727 48181				
Global Managed	702.60	739.60	+ 2.40	...
Global Property	321.40	338.30	...	...
Global Fixed Int	595.70	627.10	+ 4.10	...
Global Equity	772.40	813.10	+ 2.00	...
Global Cash	234.40	246.70	+ 0.20	...
For Laurentian see Lincoln				
LEGAL & GENERAL UNIT ASSURANCE				
2 Montefiore Road, Hove, Sussex BN3 1SE				
01273 824000				
B Soc Lnkd Init	134.80	141.90	...	...
-do- Acc	198.70	209.20	...	...
Brit Opps Init	180.30	189.80	- 0.40	...
-do- Acc	240.10	252.80	- 0.40	...
Cash Initial	171.30	180.40	+ 0.20	...
-do- Acc	316.30	333.00	+ 0.30	...
Equity Initial	823.70	867.10	- 3.30	...
-do- Acc	1521.00	1601.10	- 5.90	...
Fixed Initial	374.60	394.40	+ 2.20	...
-do- Acc	691.70	728.20	+ 4.20	...
Index-Lnkd Gilt	139.10	146.50	+ 0.80	...
-do- Acc	219.10	230.70	+ 1.10	...
Intl Initial	336.70	354.50	- 2.10	...
-do- Acc	612.10	644.40	- 3.80	...
Managed Initial	548.40	577.30	- 1.40	...
-do- Acc	1012.50	1065.80	- 2.60	...
Property Initial	228.10	240.20	+ 0.50	...
-do- Acc	421.20	443.40	+ 0.80	...
LINCOLN				
The Quays, 101-105 Oxford Road, Uxbridge,				
Middx UB8 1LZ 01895 200 200				
Equity Units	17134	...	-52.00	...
Property Units	2947	3102	-21.00	...
Bal Bd Exec Unit	7958	8376	- 9.00	...
2nd Equity Acc	809.20	851.70	- 2.80	...
2nd High Inc Ac	778.90	819.80	- 0.80	...
2nd Property Acc	265.00	278.90	+ 1.90	..
2nd Mngd 2 Acc	201.00	211.50	+ 0.50	...
2nd Mngd 3 Acc	552.90	581.90	- 0.60	...
2nd Mngd 4 Acc	267.20	281.20	- 0.40	...
2nd Deposit Acc	310.40	326.60	+ 0.20	...
2nd Gilt Acc	344.50	362.50	+ 1.40	...
2nd Amer Acc	873.00	918.80	- 3.30	...
2nd Intl Mny Acc	242.10	254.70	- 0.40	...
2nd Index Acc	227.20	239.10	+ 0.80	...
2nd Far East Acc	388.80	409.10	+ 0.10	...
2nd Global Acc	185.60	195.30	- 0.50	...
2nd Euro Acc	199.00	209.40	+ 0.20	...
2nd Japan Acc	138.10	145.30	+ 3.70	...
2nd Int Cr Bd Acc	170.80	179.70	...	..
2nd Cap Gth Acc	157.50	165.60	+ 1.00	...
ex-Laurentian				
Property	563.70	593.20	+ 0.40	...
Managed	496.20	522.30	- 1.10	...
American	520.50	547.80	- 1.80	...
UK Equity Fd	586.40	617.10	- 2.10	...
Japan	151.50	159.40	+ 3.90	...
Index-Lkd	203.30	214.00	+ 0.70	...
High Yield	1084	1141	- 3.00	...
Money	441.00	464.10	+ 0.40	...
International	412.80	434.40	+ 0.30	...
Henderson Active	223.10	234.70	- 1.80	...
Perpetual Active	368.70	388.00	- 3.10	...
Growth Acc	777.20	818.00	- 1.00	...
Gilt Edged	487.90	513.50	+ 2.20	...
European	181.60	191.10	+ 0.10	..
Far East	211.90	223.00	- 2.30	.
LONDON LIFE				
100 Temple Street, Bristol, BS1 6EA				
0117 984 7777				
Equity ‡	1129.30	..	+ 4.90	...
Fixed Interest ‡	498.20	...	+ 4.00	.
Property ‡	468.20	..	+ 0.50	.
Deposit ‡	323.10	.	+ 0.20	..
Mixed ‡	713.20	...	+ 2.70	...
Indexed Stock ‡	242.20	...	+ 1.60	...
International ‡	317.20	...	+ 0.40	..
Equity A ‡	261.20	..	+ 1.10	..
Fixed Int A ‡	230.30	...	+ 2.00	..
Property A ‡	205.20	...	+ 0.30	
Deposit A ‡	184.30	...	+ 0.10	..
Mixed A ‡	233.60	...	+ 0.80	..
Index Stock A ‡	189.10	...	+ 1.30	.
International A ‡	197.60	...	+ 0.30	..
Equity P ‡	978.00	...	+ 4.80	..
Fixed Int P ‡	681.70	...	+ 6.50	..
Property P ‡	368.40	...	+ 0.40	..
Deposit P ‡	389.30	...	+ 0.50	.
Mixed P ‡	674.00	...	+ 3.00	..
Index Stock P ‡	278.60	...	+ 2.10	..
International P ‡	373.10	...	+ 1.00	...
LONDON & MANCHESTER ASSCE				
Winslade Park, Exeter EX5 1DS. 01392 282456				
Inv Trust Cap ‡	617.40	...	- 1.30	
-do- Acc ‡	1148.70	...	- 1.40	..
Property Cap ‡	140.10	...		...
-do- Acc ‡	248.70	...	+ 0.10	..
Fxd Interest Cap ‡	201.60	...	+ 1.50	..
-do- Acc ‡	360.90	...	+ 3.10	..
Equity Cap ‡	376.70	.	- 1.50	...
-do- Acc ‡	686.50	..	- 2.10	...
Internatl Cap ‡	234.40	..	- 0.30	..
-do- Acc ‡	422.30	..	- 0.20	..
Gtd Deposit Cap ‡	160.30	..		...
-do- Acc ‡	284.50	..	+ 0.20	7.20
Flexible Cap ‡	378.40	...	- 0.70	.
-do- Acc ‡	686.80	...	- 0.70	..
Moneymaker Fd ‡	524.40	...	+ 0.60	...
Capital Growth ‡	2236.00	...	- 5.40	..
M & G				
Victoria Road, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 1FB				
01245 266266				
Amer Bond Acc	514.10	541.90	- 3.20	...
Amer Rec Bond	640.30	672.40	- 4.10	...
Am Smlr Cos Bd	253.80	266.60	- 2.40	...
Australasia Bd	319.20	335.30	- 0.80	...
Commodity Bond	400.40	420.50	- 6.90	...
Deposit Bond Acc	395.20	415.10	+ 0.30	...
Equity Bond Acc	1855.90	1948.70	+10.10	...
European Bd Acc	517.90	543.90	- 1.00	...
Extra Yld Bd Acc	950.90	998.50	- 2.20	...
Gilt Bond Acc	508.00	533.50	+ 3.20	...
Gold Bond Acc	155.00	162.80	- 7.40	...
High Yield Bond	402.60	422.80	+ 2.00	...
Index-Lnk Gi Bd	229.50	241.00	+ 1.40	...
International Bd	860.00	903.10	+ 4.20	...
Japan Bond Acc	176.70	185.60	+ 5.40	...
Japan Sm Cos Ac	165.60	174.00	+ 3.50	...
Managed Bonds	1065.00	1118.40	+ 3.20	...
Prop Bond Acc	489.00	513.50	+ 0.50	...
Rec Bond Acc	944.30	991.60	+ 0.40	...
S East Asia Bd Acc	341.30	358.50	- 6.00	...
MGM ASSURANCE				
MGM House, Heene Road, Worthing				
BN11 2DY. 01903 204631				
UK Equity	285.00	300.00	- 1.00	...
UK Equity Acc	436.70	459.70	- 1.30	..
Special Sits	119.10	125.40	- 0.30	...
Special Sits Acc	182.60	192.20	- 0.30	...
North American	229.70	241.80	- 1.40	...
N American Acc	352.10	370.70	- 1.90	...
Pacific Basin	328.10	345.40	- 0.90	...
Pacific Basin Acc	503.00	529.50	- 0.80	...
Fixed Interest	304.00	320.00	+ 0.60	...
Fixed Interest Acc	466.60	491.20	+ 1.70	..
Property	185.30	195.10	+ 0.10	...
Property Acc	284.30	299.30	+ 0.20	...
Deposit	155.00	163.20	+ 0.10	...
Deposit Acc	237.90	250.50	+ 0.20	...
Managed	305.60	321.70	- 0.50	...
Managed Acc	431.60	454.40	- 0.40	...
MERCHANT INVESTORS				
St Bartholomews House, Lewins Mead				
Bristol BS1 2NH				
0117 9266 366				
Property	438.20	461.20	+ 0.30	..
UK Equity	461.90	486.20	- 1.40	...
Gilt Edged	677.80	713.40	+ 5.40	...
Interest Fund	437.50	460.50	+ 0.40	...
Managed Fd	577.20	607.50	+ 1.50	...
Intl Equity	687.20	723.30	- 2.10	...
North American	280.80	295.50	- 4.10	...
Far East	438.10	461.10	- 3.60	...
Intl Currency	259.70	273.30	- 0.40	...
NPI				
48 Gracechurch Street, London EC3P 3HH				
0171 623 4200				
Managed	595.40	626.70	- 1.20	..
UK Equity	828.00	871.50	- 2.80	...
Overseas Equity	533.90	562.00	- 2.70	...
Americas	513.30	540.30	- 2.90	...
Far East	548.10	576.90	- 5.20	...
Property	233.70	246.00	- 0.10	...
Fixed Interest	446.40	469.80	+ 2.20	...
Indexed Gilt	256.90	270.40	+ 1.40	...
Deposit	238.50	251.00	+ 0.20	...
NAT WEST LIFE ASSCE LTD				
PO Box 886, Trinity Quay, Bristol BS99 5LJ				
0117 940 4040				
Growth Mgd Pens	168.80	177.60	- 0.40	...
NORWICH UNION LIFE INSURANCE SOCIETY - Ex NUAM Funds				
PO Box 140, Norwich NR3 1PP				
01603 622200				
Managed Fund	1812.10	1907.50	- 5.60	...
Equity Fund	4200.70	4421.80	-23.50	...
Property Fd	675.50	711.10	+ 0.50	...
Fixed Int Fd	697.80	734.50	+ 4.80	...
Deposit Fund	387.00	407.40	- 0.30	...
Intl Fund	291.00	306.30	- 0.40	.
OLD MUTUAL				
2 Bartley Way, Hook, Hants RG27 9XA				
01256 768888				
Equity Fund Acc	377.90	398.70	- 1.30	..
Fxd Interest Acc	282.10	297.60	- 1.90	.
International Acc	283.20	298.40	- 1.20	..
Managed Acc	260.60	274.90	- 0.50	.
Property Acc	220.00	232.10	+ 0.30	.
Money Acc	169.50	178.90	- 0.10	.
Spec Sits Acc	211.30	222.90	- 0.70	.
Japan Equity Acc	91.30	96.90	- 1.90	..
N Amer Acc	214.20	226.00	- 0.70	.
Pacific Acc	133.70	141.10	+ 0.20	..
European Acc	254.90	268.90	- 3.40	..
PEARL ASSURANCE				
The Pearl Centre, Lynch Wood, Peterborough				
PE2 6FY 01733 470 470				
Inv Prop Dist	143.40	151.00	- 0.10	.
Prop Acc (Gr 89)	344.80	363.00	+ 0.30	.
Inv Equity	1591.50	1664.80	- 4.80	...
Inv Managed	1046.30	1101.40	- 1.90	.
Ret Managed	1229.20	1294.50	- 2.30	...
For Provident Mutual see General Accident				
PRUDENTIAL				
Holborn Bars, London EC1N 2NH				
0171 405 9222				
Managed	430.30	448.30	...	...
PRUDENTIAL INDIVIDUAL LIFE FDS				
1 Stephen Street, London W1P 2AP				
0171 548 3278				
Managed Fund	980.80	1032.50	- 3.70	..
Equity Fund	2071.90	2181.00	-19.40	..
Intl Fund	740.70	779.70	+ 0.60	...
Fixed Interest	652.50	686.90	+ 2.80	...
Property Fund	504.30	530.90	...	..
Cash Fund	409.60	431.20	+ 0.30	
Pacific Basin	347.70	366.00	- 0.60	.
N American Fd	381.90	402.10	+ 2.40	...
Euro Fund	366.80	386.30	- 0.40	.
Balanced Fund	194.40	204.70	- 0.90	..
Strategic Fund	210.70	221.80	+ 0.20	.
ROYAL HERITAGE LIFE ASSURANCE				
Peterborough Business Park, Peterborough				
PE2 6GG. 01733 390000				
Mult Grow (45) ‡	923.60		...	...
-do- Acc	505.10	531.70	...	..
Op Prop	534.00	562.10	- 0.50	...
Op Equity	1301.50	1369.90	- 0.20	..
Op High Yield	685.60	721.60	+ 6.80	..
Op Managed	993.00	1045.80	+ 0.80	.
Op Deposit	429.50	452.10	+ 0.40	.
Japan Smlr	155.10	163.20	- 2.90	...
Managed Gth	348.30	366.60	- 1.20	...
British	473.90	498.90	- 2.80	...
Global Bond	121.70	128.10	...	..
Gold Share	83.90	88.30	- 1.10	..
Japan	318.30	335.00	+ 4.10	...
UK Smlr Cos	594.50	625.70	- 0.30	...
Mngd Growth	575.20	605.40	- 0.90	..
ROYAL LIFE INSURANCE				
New Hall Place, Liverpool L69 3HS				
0151 239 3000				
Royal Life Unit Linked				
Managed Fund	473.50	498.40	..	...
Equity Fund	708.90	746.20	- 1.60	...
Property Fund	354.70	373.30	+ 0.90	...
International	552.40	581.90	+ 0.70	...
Pacific Basin	257.50	271.00	- 2.40	..
United States	373.30	392.90	- 0.80	...
Gilt Fund	431.60	454.30	+ 6.90	..
SAVE & PROSPER				
16-22 Western Road, Romford, Essex				
RM1 3LB. 01708 766966				
Bal Inv Fund	90.60	95.90	+ 0.10	2.40
Deposit Fund (2)	415.60	439.80	+ 0.40	6.44
Gilt Fund	605.00	640.30	+ 4.20	8.27
Global Equity Fd	269.20	284.90	- 1.40	...
Property Fund (46)	122.90	130.10	- 0.30	7.34
AG Bond Fund	159.00	168.30	- 0.60	..
SCOTTISH AMICABLE				
150 St Vincent Street, Glasgow				
0141 248 2323				
Equity	776.30	817.20	...	...
Fixed Interest	422.70	445.00	+ 3.30	...
Index-Linked	217.40	228.90	+ 1.20	...
International	508.20	535.00	+ 3.10	...
Property	327.60	344.90	+ 2.40	...
Cash	251.90	265.20	+ 0.20	...
Managed	568.10	598.00	+ 1.50	..
Cap Gteed Bd	152.10	160.20		...
95% Safeguard	103.30	...	+ 0.10	...
100% Safeguard	99.40	...	+ 0.10	...
Wealth Pres Cap	102.10	...	+ 0.30	...
Wealth Pres Inc	147.50	..	+17.20	...
SCOTTISH EQUITABLE				
28 St Andrew Square, Edinburgh EH2 1YF				
0131 556 9101				
Cash	199.430	209.930	+ 0.10	...
Index-Linked	184.30	194.10	+ 0.60	...
Fixed Interest	209.70	220.80	+ 1.50	...
Mixed	319.30	336.20	- 0.70	...
UK Equity	318.50	335.30	- 1.10	...
International	298.50	314.30	- 0.10	..
American	374.40	394.10	- 1.30	...
Japan	186.40	196.30	+ 3.90	..
European	352.20	370.80	- 3.30	...
Pacific	361.10	380.20	- 4.60	...
Technology	504.50	531.10	- 9.10	...
Fgn Bd/Crrcy	236.50	249.10	+ 0.30	...
SCOTTISH LIFE INVESTMENTS				
19 St Andrews Square, Edinburgh EH2 1YE				
0131 225 2211				
Property	236.90	251.60	+ 0.30	..
UK Equity	478.40	503.60	+ 1.80	...
American	333.10	350.80	+ 4.00	.
Pacific	338.70	356.70	+ 0.60	..
European	621.20	653.90	- 4.50	..
Global Mgd	362.50	381.70	+ 1.80	..
Fixed Interest	274.00	288.50	+ 2.60	...
Index Linked	220.20	231.90	+ 1.40	..
Deposit	214.20	225.60	+ 0.30	..
Managed	356.50	375.30	+ 1.60	..
Worldwide	138.10	145.50	+ 0.70	..
Pen Worldwide	149.60	157.60	+ 0.90	.
SCOTTISH MUTUAL ASSURANCE				
109 St Vincent Street, Glasgow G2 5HN				
0141 248 6321				
Flex Fund (35)	2110.90	2176.20	-37.90	...
Safety Fund	278.60	293.30	+ 1.00	.
Growth Fund	290.00	305.30	- 0.30	..
Opportunity Fd	292.20	307.60	+ 0.80	...
Cash Fund	190.30	200.40	+ 0.20	...
European Fund	459.00	482.20	- 3.10	...
Gilts & Fxd Int	235.80	248.30	+ 2.50	.
Index-Linked Fd	201.40	212.10	+ 0.80	
International Fd	320.70	337.60	- 0.10	...
North American	315.10	331.70	- 0.20	...
Property Fund	133.00	140.10	- 0.10	..
UK Equity	325.80	343.00	- 0.10	..
UK Smaller	349.50	367.90	+ 2.70	...
SCOTTISH PROVIDENT				
6 St Andrews Square, Edinburgh EH2 2YA				
0131 556 9181				
Mixed	339.40	357.40	...	..
Equity	383.20	403.50	- 0.10	.
International	306.00	322.20	- 0.30	...
Property	249.30	262.50	+ 0.20	.
Fixed Interest	272.10	286.50	+ 1.00	...
Index Linked	202.20	213.00	+ 1.30	...
Cash	202.80	213.60	+ 0.20	...
Formerly Prulific				
Bal Gwth Mngd	996.50	1060.20	+ 0.50	..
Cash Fund	369.70	389.60	...	..
Property Fund	322.90	340.30	- 0.10	..
Equity Fund	1045.60	1112.40	- 1.60	...
Fxd Interest Fund	557.30	587.30	+ 1.80	
International	436.90	459.50	- 0.50	.
High Income	933.40	993.00	+ 4.60	...
Far East	561.40	597.30	- 0.60	...
North American	731.30	778.00	- 4.90	...
Special Sits	917.30	975.90	+ 1.90	...
Technology	932.90	992.50	-12.50	..
Extra Income Fd	502.00	534.10	- 2.10	...
Gilt Fund	542.20	576.90	- 0.30	...
European	191.00	203.20	- 0.20	...
Adventurous Mg	251.50	265.10	- 0.30	.
Secure Mgd	179.50	189.20	+ 0.20	...
Equity Inc Dist	140.30	147.90	+ 0.50	4.04
Managed Dist	125.80	132.60	+ 0.10	4.67
Henderson Investment Bonds				
UK Equity Fd	423.20	451.30	- 0.60	.
North America	449.90	478.70	- 6.20	.
Far East Fund	551.40	586.70	- 0.80	...
Global Managed	555.50	591.00	- 0.30	..
Deposit Fund	244.30	262.50	...	...
Prime Residential	141.80	149.30	...	...
European Fund	349.30	371.60	+ 0.50	..
Fixed Interest	63.30	67.30	...	..
SCOTTISH WIDOWS				
PO Box 902, Edinburgh EH16 5BU				
0131 655 6000				
Inv Pol 1	1242.70	1242.70	..	...
Inv Pol 2	1122.70	1181.90	...	.
Inv Pol 3	1060.30	1116.20	..	.
Inv Cash	346.10	365.00	..	.
Mixed Fund	557.80	587.20	+ 2.70	.
Equity Fund	722.50	760.60	+ 0.80	..
Property Fund	271.30	285.80	+ 0.10	..
International Fd	552.30	581.50	+ 1.70	.
Fixed Interest Fd	438.90	462.00	+ 5.80	...
Indexed Stock Fd	223.40	235.30	+ 1.40	.
Cash Fund	250.80	264.10	+ 0.20	...
SKANDIA LIFE				
Skandia House, Portland Terrace,				
Southampton SO9 7BX				
01703 334411				
Managed Acc	480.60	505.80	+ 0.90	..
Equity Acc	616.30	648.70	+ 0.70	.
International Acc	362.60	381.60	+ 0.30	.
Property	241.70	254.40	+ 0.20	...
STANDARD LIFE ASSURANCE CO				
Standard Life House, 30 Lothian Road,				
Edinburgh EH1 2DH 0131 225 2552				
Cash	294.50	310.00	- 0.20	..
Equity	1361.60	1433.30	- 0.50	
European	206.60	217.50	+ 0.10	...
Far East	166.30	175.10	- 0.20	
Fixed Interest	460.10	484.40	+ 2.40	...
Index Linked	237.70	250.30	+ 1.00	...
International	668.80	704.10	- 0.30	...
Managed	877.80	924.10	+ 0.10	...
Nth American	193.50	203.70	- 1.00	..
Property	402.00	423.20	+ 0.40	.
Pensions				
Cash	472.80	497.70	+ 0.50	...
Equity	2097.00	2207.40	- 0.20	...
European	273.90	288.40	+ 0.10	...
Far East	131.10	138.00	+ 0.20	.
Fixed Interest	661.00	695.90	+ 4.20	...
Index Linked	335.40	353.10	+ 1.80	...
International	1015.00	1068.50	- 5.40	.
Managed	1313.50	1383.00	- 1.10	..
Nth American	260.30	274.00	- 1.70	..
Property	584.80	615.60	+ 1.40	..
Stock Exchange	296.10	311.70	- 2.30	...
SUN ALLIANCE				
St Mark's Court, Horsham, Sussex				
01403 232323				
Managed Fund	859.50	904.80	- 0.80	.
Equity Fund	1187.30	1249.80	- 5.00	.
Fixed Interest Fd	474.40	499.40	+ 3.20	...
Index-Linked Fd	359.10	378.00	+ 2.10	..
Property Fund	563.60	593.30	+ 1.30	..
International Fd	794.70	836.00	+ 3.10	...
N American Fd	362.20	381.30	- 2.10	..
Far East Fund	235.90	248.40	- 2.20	..
Deposit Fund	329.30	346.70	- 0.30	..
Intnl Bd ‡	£106.20	...	- 1.80	..
Worldwide Bond	166.20	175.00	..	.
European	246.00	259.00	- 0.60	.
Phoenix Assurance				
Wealth Assured	865.20	910.80	- 0.50	..
Ebor Phoenix Eq	734.00	784.40		
Property Growth				
Property Fund ‡	659.90	...	+ 1.90	.
-do- Acc ‡	610.30	..	+ 1.30	..
Agricultural Fd ‡	914.00	.	+ 0.80	.
-do- Acc ‡	871.50	.	+ 0.70	..
Abbey Nat Fd ‡	468.20	...	+ 0.80	..
Abbey Nat Acc ‡	511.30	...	+ 0.80	..
Investment Fd ‡	461.60	...	+ 0.40	
Investment (A) ‡	441.40	...	+ 0.40	...
Equity ‡	1747.50	...	+ 6.80	.
Equity Acc ‡	1663.90		+ 6.60	.
Money Fund ‡	530.90	...	+ 0.40	.
-do- Acc ‡	504.90		+ 0.50	.
Actuarial Fd ‡	754.50	.	+ 0.60	..
Gilt-Edged Fd ‡	447.10	.	+ 2.00	.
-do- Acc ‡	447.10	..	+ 2.00	...
Retire Annuity ‡	1306.80	...		...
Immed Annuity ‡	301.00	...	...	
Bldg Soc Life ‡	249.90	..	+ 0.30	
SUN LIFE OF CANADA				
Basing View, Basingstoke, Hants RG21 2DZ				
Dealing: 01256 841414				
Growth Acc ‡	1857.40	.	- 3.60	...
Managed Acc ‡	1053.70	.	+13.00	...
Equity Account ‡	1601.90	...	+27.40	..
Mngd Fund Acc	479.10	504.30	+ 6.20	...
Equity Fund Acc	691.00	727.40	+12.60	...
Prop Fund Acc	287.40	302.50	+ 0.40	...
Fixed Int Fd Acc	361.40	380.40	+ 2.40	..
Money Fund Acc	242.10	254.90	+ 0.20	..
Indx-Lnk Scs Ac	226.40	238.30	- 0.70	..
Pers Pens Acct ‡	2381.20	..	- 4.30	..
Pers Mngd Acct	1106.00	1164.90	- 2.10	...
Pens Guarantee	304.30	320.30	+ 0.50	...
Pens Equity	448.80	472.40	- 0.70	...
Pens Property	334.70	352.50	+ 1.90	.
Pens Fixed Int	350.00	368.40	+ 0.30	...
Pens Intl	286.00	301.10	- 1.70	...
Pens Money	267.30	281.40	+ 0.40	...
Pens Indx-Lnkd	221.50	233.50	- 0.40	...
SUN LIFE UNIT				
St James Barton, Bristol BS99 7SL				
0117 9426911				
Managed Acc	1092.20	1149.70	+ 8.10	..
Property Acc	411.80	433.50	- 2.00	
Equity Acc	1908.70	2009.20	+12.60	...
Fixed Int Acc	475.40	500.40	+ 4.40	..
Cash Acc	342.60	360.70	+ 0.20	...
Amer Equity Acc	518.80	545.90	+ 7.40	..
Japan Acc	229.00	240.10	+ 5.10	.
Pacific Acc	392.40	413.10	- 3.10	.
Far Eastern Acc	801.90	844.20	+ 0.90	..
International Acc	665.00	700.10	+ 2.30	.
Distribution Fund	311.40	327.80	+ 2.80	5.72
European	233.60	245.90	+ 1.10	...
Defrd Dist	205.00	215.80	+ 1.90	...
TSB LIFE LTD				
Charlton Place, Andover, Hants, SP10 1RE				
01264 345678				
Managed Fund	346.10	366.50	- 1.10	.
Property Fund	236.30	248.40	+ 0.30	..
Fixed Interest Fd	256.30	269.90	+ 1.00	
Money Fund	220.00	231.70	+ 0.20	...
Equity Fund	465.50	490.00	- 1.80	...
WINDSOR LIFE				
Windsor House, Telford, Shropshire				
01952 292929				
Managed Bond	884.50	931.00	- 2.70	.
Money Fund	348.70	367.00	+ 0.30	...
Equity Fund	834.00	877.80	- 2.70	...
Fixed Interest	324.80	341.90	+ 1.70	...
Property Fund	405.90	427.30	+ 0.30	...
Gresham Framlington				
American & Gnrl	656.40	691.70	-20.00	...
Income	951.70	1002.40	- 5.80	.
International Gth	697.60	735.10	- 5.90	...
Capital Fund	821.00	865.10	+ 0.50	.
Recovery Fund	598.30	630.50	+ 0.20	..
Japan & General	200.50	211.30	+ 4.80	.
Formerly AEtna				
Life Funds				
Squirrel	19.85	20.90	+ 0.02	...
Bear	24.30	25.58	- 0.01	...
Owl	27.53	28.98	- 0.07	...
Bull	22.71	23.91	- 0.07	...
Stag	23.85	25.11	- 0.15	..
Gilt Edged	21.52	22.65	+ 0.11	...
Deposit	17.17	18.07	+ 0.01	...
Pensions				
Squirrel	27.82	29.28	+ 0.03	...
Bear	35.41	37.27	- 0.02	...
Owl	39.59	41.67	- 0.13	...
Bull	30.78	32.40	- 0.12	...
Stag	32.08	33.77	- 0.25	...
Gilt Edged	28.30	29.79	+ 0.18	..
Deposit	22.89	24.10	+ 0.02	..
Pre 1982 Series				
3-Way Fund ‡		748.47	- 2.14	..
1982 Series				
UK Equity	463.13	487.51	- 1.47	...
N Amer Equity	364.11	383.27	- 3.46	...
Far East Equity	391.93	412.56	- 1.62	...
Fixed	342.99	361.04	- 1.83	...
Cash Deposit	225.10	236.95	+ 0.19	..
Property	172.95	182.05	+ 0.14	..
Special Opp	460.81	485.06	- 2.94	...
Managed	393.49	414.20	- 1.20	...
Index-Linked Fd	211.78	222.93	+ 0.90	...
Formerly Crown				
Life Mangd Acc	740.30	776.60	- 2.30	...
Life Fxd Int Acc	431.10	453.70	+ 2.20	...
Life Equity Acc	1101.10	1154.40	- 3.50	...
Life Money Acc	328.30	345.40	+ 0.30	..
Life Inv Tst Acc	968.70	1016.40	- 3.10	...
Life Intl Acc	551.40	578.10	- 2.70	...
Life High Inc Acc	1023.70	1074.70	- 5.80	.
Life Property Acc	272.60	286.90	+ 0.20	...
Brewin Equity	885.30	931.70	- 0.40	.

WEEKEND MONEY LETTERS

Reduction in the dividend tax credit will hit all pension schemes

From Mr G. M. Armitage

Sir, At a time when rules are coming into effect to give greater protection to pension schemes, it is ironic that a new and potentially disastrous threat has emerged: a threat which, if implemented, would even be blessed by Parliament.

The suggested reduction in the dividend tax credit (or even elimination) would hit all pension schemes as their income streams and asset values would be immediately reduced. In many cases, there is no longer an employer who could top up the funds and benefits, including current pensions, would have to be cut. In other cases, the burden of putting in more finance could be so high that the employers' cost base would be increased. This could only hit UK competitiveness and further increase pressure to shed labour, hence potentially increasing unemployment.

It is not just the millions and millions of members of occupational pension schemes who would be hurt, but also anyone with a private pension scheme, endowment policy, or even the humble Pep — to name but a few of those who would be affected.

The potential implications of this threat are alarming and a clear statement of intent from the major political parties is called for now, before May 1. This is a crucial issue threatening the incomes of a very large number of people and having wide economic ramifications.

Yours faithfully,
G. ARMITAGE,
99 Overstrand Road,
Cromer, Norfolk.

Polite service

From Mr R. J. Hobdell

Sir, It seems that much correspondence to your financial page concerns complaints about the service received from financial companies and government departments. I would wish to redress this; I find it a great pleasure to deal with National Savings at Durham.

On the telephone one is greeted politely in that most pleasant "Geordie" accent. Queries are dealt with promptly and if they say they will ring back, they are as good as their word. An example of their service is that after a telephone request for a form at 10am on Friday, the form arrived in the 8am post on Saturday, thanks to the help of the much maligned Post Office.

Yours faithfully,
R. HOBDELL,
28 Arkwright Road,
Sanderstead, Surrey.

Ernie's drop of Scotch

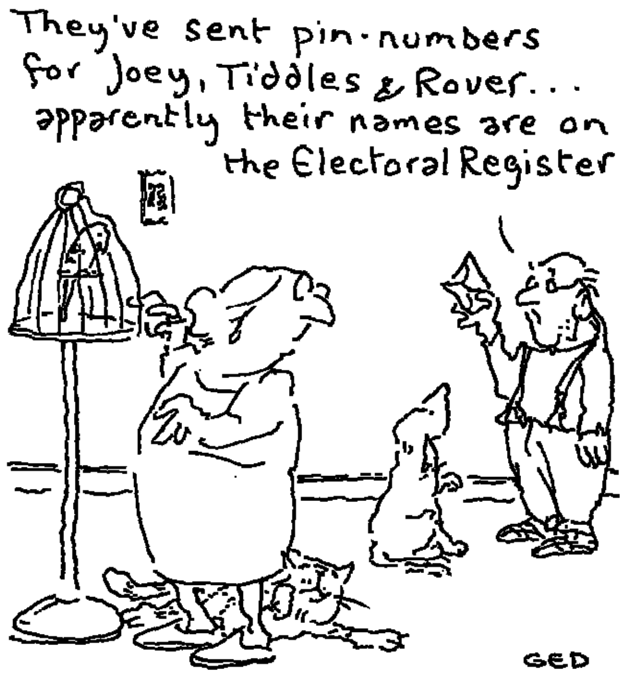
From Mr G. Woolley

Sir, Ernie, the Premium Bond draw machine, must be more sensitive than we give him credit for. You recently published a letter from a Scottish reader who drew attention to the lack of Scottish bondholders in the main prizewinners' lists.

A few weeks later, we learnt that the April draw saw not only the £1 million prize go to Strathclyde but a £100,000 prize and two of the £50,000 prizes also.

Faultless timing from such a "random" machine.

Yours faithfully,
GRAHAM WOOLLEY,
134 Seymour Road,
Gloucester.



They've sent pin-numbers for Joey, Tiddles & Rover... apparently their names are on the Electoral Register

Why it is unwise to bank on electoral register

From Mr John Welch

Sir, A member of Croydon South Labour Party has recently been refused a credit card by the People's Bank. The reason given was that his name was not on the electoral register and that this was required as proof of residency.

I have been an election agent for 25 years to 20 candidates in various parts of South London. This has given me considerable experience in dealing with electoral registers, and I would certainly not regard an entry on them as proof of residence.

I have found registered people who have been dead for several years, people who left the address some years ago and even people who never existed (the last named has been due to long names being split into two sections). Conversely, I have found registered babies, the same person twice at different addresses within the constituency, and on one occasion all the juvenile residents of a children's home.

Presumably, these names would stand a better chance of getting a People's Bank credit card than my colleague!

Yours faithfully,
JOHN WELCH
(Organiser),
Croydon South Constituency
Labour Party,
Ruskin House,
Coombe Road,
Croydon, Surrey.

Rule Britannia

From Mr J. W. Drummond

Sir, After all the hype by the Britannia Building Society about its loyalty bonus, I was most interested to read "What price loyalty now?" (Weekend Money, April 5).

A depositor of more than ten years, which earned me double points, my deposit of £60,000 brought me a bonus of £88 less tax of £17.60. This was due to the cut-off at £20,000.

As I had seen a figure of £500 mentioned I inquired at the local Britannia office and was told that if I had had a mortgage of £60,000 and its house insurance I would have got much more. Fair share?

I keenly looked forward to the increased interest rates to be announced on April 7 only to be told there was to be no interest-rate tier between £20,000 and £100,000.

Yours faithfully,
J. DRUMMOND,
6 Brackenrigg Drive,
Keswick, Cumbria.

Payout policies mixed

From Mr S. C. Tomes

Sir, Perhaps I could remind Dr S. Jennings (B&W 'bought on the cheap?', Weekend Money Letters, March 22) that the borrowers in Cheltenham & Gloucester Building Society were denied any payout when it was swallowed up by Lloyds Bank in 1995, so maybe he should feel lucky that the Bristol & West is paying anything at all to him as a borrower.

Yours faithfully,
SIMON TOMES,
Mudgley House Farm,
Wedmore, Somerset.

Voting not to order

From Mrs C. Brinkley

Sir, I hold an account with the Halifax Building Society and have recently been asked to vote in respect of the election of directors and a number of resolutions, including two alterations to rules. In the accompanying leaflet it is recommended that I vote against two of the resolutions and that I vote in favour of three particular candidates.

Surely in a ballot I should be allowed to make up my own mind — it would be a different matter if each candidate personally asked for my support. Needless to say, I have voted for the two candidates not deemed worthy of my vote.

Yours faithfully,
CHRISTINE BRINKLEY,
35 St George's Road,
Harrogate,
North Yorkshire.

Jenny Grove reports on hardship under the 'third rate' rule

Cruel trap for war widows

Pension frustration

From Mrs E. D. Marshall

Sir, I was very interested in reading Jenny Grove's report (Weekend Money, April 12). My husband died in 1995 after 50 years of marriage. He joined the Navy in 1935, serving 35 years, promoted to Lieutenant-Commander. He always felt bitterly disappointed knowing that on his death I would only be granted one third of his pension.

We all want to provide for ourselves, so we can spend the last years in our own homes. A realisation is also called for that the discussion about the elderly widows should not be conducted solely in economic and financial terms.

The elderly have their own specific and peculiar problems. Making them feel as if they are a burden on the country is equal to giving them a shove towards a desperate end. It is miserly repayment for the efforts they made when they were able to. They should be given more deserving dignity, and would be of far more use to the society they helped build, if their experience and capabilities are utilised.

The Government has spent years not giving a fig to what extent its attitude towards Armed Forces pensions and pensioners' families was affecting the situation. Some realistic thinking must be done.

A victory for 52,000 elderly widows who still only receive a third-rate pension would do much for the next Prime Minister's image.

Yours faithfully,
E. D. MARSHALL,
47 Chestnut Avenue,
Bedhampton,
Hampshire.

From Captain Murray Dunlop

Sir, Jenny Grove's article serves as a necessary reminder of the continuing unfair treatment of Service widows.

The gross anomalies of pension paid year by year for equivalent rank and service to those retiring also have a considerable effect. If I die tomorrow, my widow will receive about £9,700 per annum, whereas, if I had retired 121 days earlier she would receive about £12,200.

Those 121 days' service have, incidentally, resulted in us receiving some £71,000 less in pension over the 21 years of my retirement, and there are many who are worse off because of this unfairness.

Yours faithfully,
MURRAY DUNLOP
(Captain, RN),
6 Dukes Meadow,
Woodbridge, Suffolk.

Letters or information for Weekend Money may be sent by fax to 0171-782 5082. Letters should include a daytime telephone number. *The Times* asks that original documents are not sent in.

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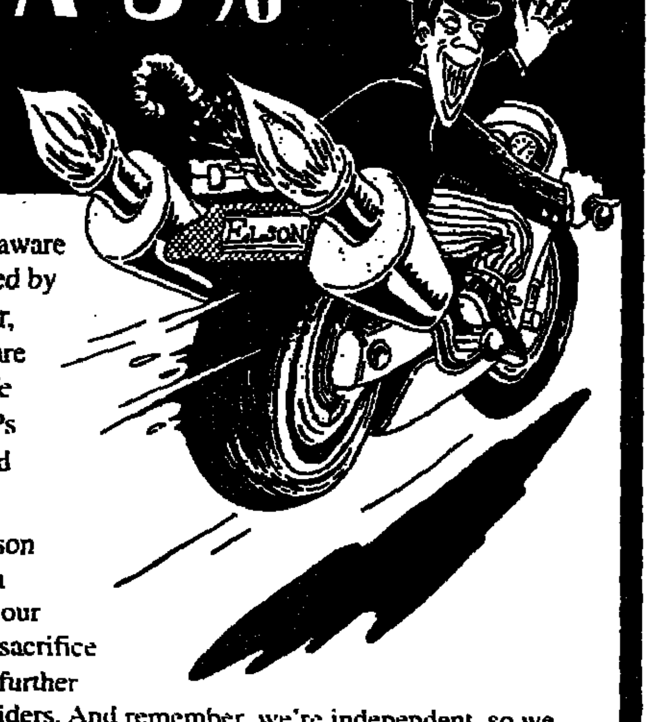

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THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

For AIB see Govett (John)

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
AXA EQUITY & LAW UNIT TST MGRS				
01203 553 231				
General Acc	725.90	772.30	- 1.90	2.33
General Inc	601.40	639.80	- 1.50	2.33
UK Growth Acc	502.60	525.80	- 1.70	2.48
UK Growth Inc	321.90	342.50	- 1.10	2.48
Higher Inc Acc	901.80	959.40	- 2.70	3.94
Higher Inc Inc	473.10	503.30	- 1.50	3.94
Gilt/Fxd Int Acc	[illegible]	257.00	+ 0.80	5.57
Gilt/Fxd Int Inc	91.77	96.93	+ 0.32	5.57
Nth America	343.00	364.90	- 3.70	
Europe	389.60	414.70	- 3.40	0.31
[illegible]	99.79	102.60	- 0.40	2.59
Bri Fndmtl Acc	126.70	134.80	- 0.50	4.56
Bri Fndmtl Inc	83.54	88.98	- 0.39	4.56
Global Opps	102.60	109.20	- 0.90	0.11
Balanced Acc	66.21	70.44	- 0.17	2.37
Balanced Inc	61.25	65.16	0.15	2.37
Japan Acc	31.41	33.80	+ 0.62	
Pac Basin Acc	377.40	401.50	- 4.20	0.97
ABBEY UNIT TST MGRS				
0345 717 373				
Gilts & Fixed Int	132.60	140.70†	- 1.10	6.62
High Inc Equity	195.60	209.40†	- 0.20	4.54
Worldwide Bond	262.60	272.50	0.10	4.3[illegible]
American Growth	411.50	439.70	2.70	0.38
Asian Pacific	316.10	338.10	3.60	0.41
Assets & Earnings	319.50	341.70	- 1.70	2.76
Euro Capital Acc	200.40	214.30	- 2.10	0.74
Extra Inc	42.76	45.49†	0.29	3.05
General	299.10	307.50	- 1.50	2.99
Global Opps	73.21	77.82	- 0.42	0.57
Japan	87.05	93.11	- 2.20	.
Managed Inc	49.17	53.24†	- 0.15	4.31
Mastertrust	150.50	165.60	- 0.50	1.29
US Emerging Cos	169.10	180.30	- 7.10	
Ethical	87.50	92.02	- 0.48	1.58
International	135.80	144.50	- 0.50	0.60
Dividend & Growth	73.05	77.71	- 0.06	4.72
Global Gwth & Sec	75.22	80.30	- 0.21	[illegible]
Latin America	90.48	95.82	- 1.93	0.36
Capital Reserve	148.50	153.50	+ 0.10	[illegible]
ABBEY NATIONAL UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD				
0141 275 8500				
N&P UK Growth	97.00	103.10	- 0.40	2.22
Equity Income	136.70	145.40	- 0.40	4.13
Extra Income	264.80	281.50	- 0.50	6.40
Smaller Cos	114.00	121.20†	- 1.10	1.48
International	115.60	122.10†	0.70	1.41
ABERFORTH UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD				
0131 220 0733				

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Pacific Portfolio	156.61	168.40	- 1.30	0.79
UK Equity	102.98	110.04†	- 0.31	3.26
UK Equity & Bd	61.23	64.91	+ 0.16	6.26
UK Smlr Cos	54.78	58.59	- 0.03	1.61
CBF CHURCH OF ENGLAND FUNDS				
0171 588 1815				
Inv Fd Inc	808.33	820.55	- 1.41	4.19
Inv Fd Acc	808.33	820.55	- 1.41	
Fxd Int Sec Inc	156.73	156.35	+ 0.14	9.15
Fxd Int Sec Acc	156.73	156.35	+ 0.14	
COIF CHARITY FUNDS				
0171 588 1815				
Investment Inc	800.91	813.01	.	4.26
Investment Acc	537.76	558.33	.	
Fixed Int Inc	126.20	126.70	..	9.16
Fixed Int Acc	240.07	241.03	..	..
CITY FINANCIAL UT MGRS LTD				
0171 407 5966				
Beckman Intl	84.87	89.48	+ 0.52	5.60
Beck Bio Tech	37.64	41.04	- 2.05	..
Acorn Ethical Tst	186.95	196.31	+ 1.48	0.44
City Fin Assets	80.30	84.32†	- 1.19	1.83
City Fin Intl	87.91	92.31†	- 0.50	0.06
[illegible]	320.29	340.73	- 0.05	2.33
[illegible]	139.55	147.92†	+ 1.89	
J Sel Inc Sth Inc	59.69	62.68	+ 0.72	3.31
Shaw Utilities	66.68	68.74	+ 0.03	6.49
CITY OF LONDON UNIT TST MGRS LTD				
0171 711 0771 Admin: 01277 227 300				
Emerging Markets	59.73	63.37	- 0.83	
CLERICAL MEDICAL UT MGRS LTD				
0345 772 230				
American Gwth	79.05	84.10	- 0.25	
Dragon Growth	69.40	74.22	- 0.72	0.41
Equity High Inc	98.40	104.17	- 0.13	3.73
-do- Accum	144.25	152.64	- 0.19	3.73
Extra Income Inc	26.78	28.19†	+ 0.19	7.11
Extra Income Acc	30.31	31.90	+ 0.21	7.11
European Gwth	67.50	71.49	- 0.02	0.46
Evergreen	30.65	32.75	- 0.19	0.01
General Equity	115.45	121.85	- 0.45	2.65
Japan Growth	36.56	38.89	+ 0.18	
Pedigree Gwth	68.59	73.00	+ 0.50	2.10
Ped Sml Cos Inc	41.65	44.06	+ 0.17	1.15
-do- Accum	44.38	46.96	+ 0.18	1.15
Retirement Inc #	30.00	31.94	- 0.04	5.58
Special Sits	50.75	54.57	+ 0.22	2.61
UK & Overseas	62.35	65.98	+ 0.15	0.70
COLONIAL UNIT TRUSTS (UK) LTD				
01634 898 000				

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
[illegible]	207.90	221.20†	+ 3.10	0.91
New Japan	73.79	78.29	- 2.8[illegible]	
JUPITER UT MGRS LTD				
0171 581 3020				
World Health	190.42	197.30	4.50	
Income #	[illegible]	257.66	- 0.38	4.05
UK Growth	94.70	100.74	- 0.45	1.84
Intl Growth	89.72	95.47	- 0.13	0.59
Ecology	111.55	119.65†	- 0.32	0.88
European	227.93	242.27	- 0.02	0.21
Far Eastern	307.20	326.80	- 1.00	
UK Special Sits	60.29	64.29†	- 0.43	0.37
Fd of Inv Tsts	55.85	59.57	- 0.19	
High Income #	54.17	57.78†	- 0.32	4.85

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KLEINWORT BENSON UNIT TRUSTS				
Dealers: 0171 956 7354				
Income Trusts				
Bond Income	101.70	105.10†	+ 0.80	7.02
Euro Pfov Inc	109.00	116.00	- 0.10	2.75
-do- Accum	109.00	116.00	- 0.10	2.75
Gilt Yield	120.00	126.50†	+ 1.30	6.39
Global Income	235.50	250.50	- 0.40	3.18
High Yield	168.80	179.60†		5.19
-do- Accum	569.00	605.30†	- 0.10	5.19
Money Market	99.52	99.52†	+ 0.07	5.39
Smlr Cos Div	66.65	70.90	- 1.76	3.65
Tomorrows Co Ex Acc	10.22	10.37	- 0.04	3.40
Capital Growth Trusts				

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
MALDON UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD				
0131 222 4242				
Maldon General	178.80	182.30†	- 4.00	3.40
MARKS & SPENCER UNIT TRUST LTD				
0800 363432				
High Inc #	95.73	96.69	- 0.45	6.90
M & S Inv Ptflo	186.20	192.00		2.42
-do- Accum	223.20	230.10		2.42
UK Sel Ptflo	169.30	174.60	- 0.10	2.39
-do- Accum	206.30	212.60	+ 0.10	2.39
UK 100 Cos	127.40	127.40†	+ 0.30	2.52
-do- Accum	130.60	130.60†	+ 0.30	2.52
MARLBOROUGH FUND MGRS LTD				

Shares end week on a steady note

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
469	407½	Allied Domecq	427½	-½	6.9	12.9
626	547½	Bulmer (HP)	557½	-1	3.0	16.6
75½	57½	Burn Stewart	60		7.1	14.9
1040	865	Glenmorangie A	995	-5	1.5	27.1
506	425½	Grand Met	500	+1	4.0	16.1
518½	424	Guinness	513½	+9	3.9	14.6
380	334	Highland Dist	340½		3.0	15.9
336	257	Matthew Clark	293	-7	10.4	13.8
109½	90½	Merrydown W	91½		6.3	12.4
1978¾	1452½	SA Breweries	1818¾	-3½	1.9	

BANKS

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
4706¼	3671¼	ABN-AMRO	4068¾	-6¼	2.8	16.9
811	710	Abbey Natl	758½	+8	4.1	14.1
455½	388½	Allied Irish	438½	+2	4.0	
409½	363½	Aus New Z	384½	-10¼	4.9	
7678¾	5753¾	Bank America	6537½	+159¾		
373½	291½	Bank Scotland	325½	+9	2.8	11.9
1126	978½	Barclays	1010	+2	3.9	10.2
646	517½	Bk of Ireland	646	+10	3.2	14.6
7990¾	6006¼	Citicorp	6459¾	+53¼		
1731¼	1268¾	Commerzbk	1634¼	+12½	2.6	
862½	558½	Dai Ichi Kan Y	668¾	+21¼	0.6	
3490½	2709¾	Deutsche Bk	3178½	+9¾	2.0	
912½	753¾	Espirito Santo	887½		5.6	12.6
872½	594½	Fuji Bank Y	720¼	+40¼	0.6	
1622	1272½	HSBC	1538	+4	3.3	13.3
1563½	1241	HSBC HK	1485	+4½	3.5	12.9
605	483½	Irish Perm	572		2.8	
534	424	Lloyds TSB	532	-12½	3.1	17.3
819½	669½	Nat Aust Bk	783¾	+10¼	5.2	10.7
844½	663½	Nat West	678½	+8½	5.3	10.2
632½	508	Ryl Bk Scot	529½	-½	4.4	11.7
900½	681	Stand Chart	892	+27	2.0	16.0
£164¾	£164¾	Wells Fargo	£164¾		1.9	
374¾	315½	Westpac	322	+3¾	4.1	10.5

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
878½	763	Bass	795½	+10½	3.9	15.7
68½	51½	Bck for the Bdr	52		4.0	14.2

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
465½	387½	Electrocomponents	415	-8½	2.1	25.1
226½	162½	Eurodis Elec	171½		3.0	24.4
96½	76½	European Mn	95	+5½	7.0	9.7
253	220	Evans Halshaw	237½		5.7	
53½	41	Fife Indmx	45½		9.5	8.6
397½	322½	Finelist Grp	350	-1½	2.1	17.8
34½	27½	Gardiner	29	-¼	4.1	11.1
79¼	57½	Glencrewton	63		2.5	13.3
110	82½	Gowrings	107		2.5	
100	82	Hamer	93½		6.4	8.5
367½	339½	Harris (Philip)	342½		4.5	14.8
320½	294½	Headlam	306½	-3½	2.4	
155	147	Holders Tech	148½		5.5	
240½	209	ISA Intl	229½		1.6	18.3
295	240½	Inchcape	262½	-½	5.0	15.3
72	43½	Jacks (Wm)	65½	-5	4.4	
246½	214½	Kwik-Fit	239½		2.4	17.2
367	316½	Lex Service	356		5.6	11.7
122	102	Lookers	104½		9.6	7.0
14½	11	Malaya Grp	13½	+¼	6.2	17.0
8¾	5½	Marchesa	9½	+¼	1.1	13.0
41½	31½	Motsuku	32½		1.9	
472	239	Norman	245		4.1	6.8
166½	131½	Northumber	147		1.2	5.8
352¾	306¼	Partco	323½		3.0	17.5
404½	342½	Pendragon	367		3.4	16.9
223½	190½	Perry Gp	205		5.6	
751	496	Premier Farnell	499	-1	2.9	19.4
152½	124½	Quicks Group	132½	-1	6.6	
348	307½	REA	317	+1	1.6	
2½	2	Reece	2			
28	18½	Ronson	18½	-½	10.1	6.4
4	2¼	Ross Gp	3	-¼		
109½	78½	Ryland	91½		5.5	16.4
38	25½	SHP Indl	28		7.8	7.5
92½	56	Salture	69		2.2	
415½	377½	Time Products	386		3.6	15.8
270	228	UNECO	255		2.4	15.3
61½	59	United Carr Gp	61½			13.3
352½	292½	Vardy (Reg)	322½		2.6	14.6
650	498½	WF Elect	625		2.7	22.7
41	31½	Wolstan	34	-¼	3.1	10.0
172½	147½	Wyko	147½		2.2	17.2
154½	119½	Young (H)	135½		3.0	11.7

DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
420	327½	Antofagasta	392½	-5½	1.7	

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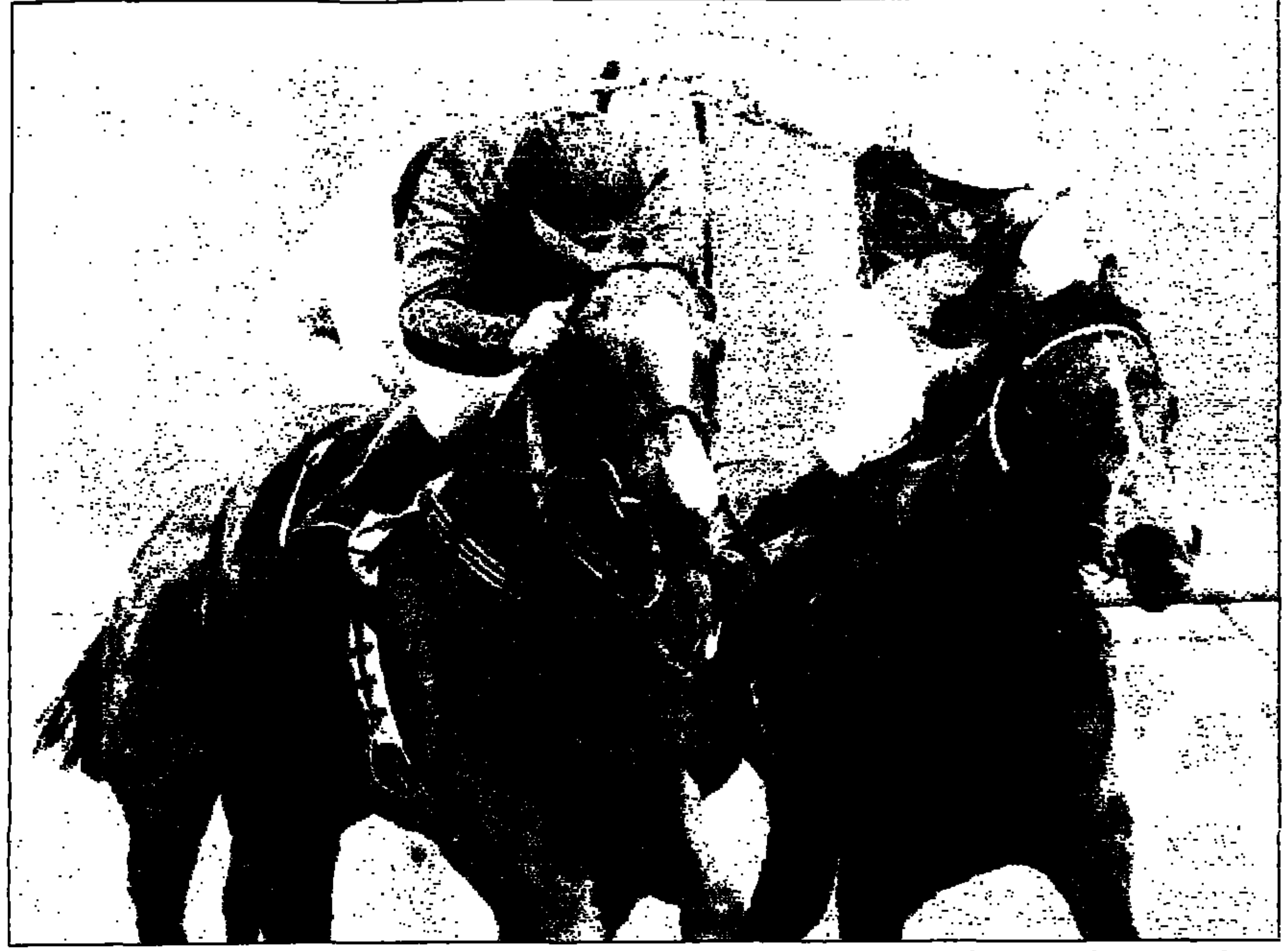
RACING: 1,000 GUINEAS THROWN OPEN AFTER CECIL-TRAINED FILLY DISAPPOINTS

Sleepytime fails to be stirred

By Julian Muscat


HUGH ROUTLEDGE

Dance Parade, left, runs on strongly to deliver a 16-1 surprise in the Fred Darling Stakes at Newbury yesterday

A TROUBLED but ultimately disappointing seasonal debut from Sleepytime yesterday resulted in her displacement as favourite for the 1,000 Guineas. *After a difficult passage* through the Dubai Duty Free Fred Darling Stakes, Sleepytime failed to summon the finishing kick of a classic miler and trailed home tamely in fourth place.

Ridden by Kieren Fallon, the daughter of Royal Academy was detained in heavy traffic as a tightly packed field sprinted for home three furlongs from the finish. Fallon could sense that Well Warned, the long-time leader, would run to the line. He could see Dance Parade, the eventual winner, come through on his outside. And he could only watch helplessly as Frankie Dettori extricated Seebe with a carelessness that would cost the Italian two days on the sidelines.

When Sleeytime eventually shook free the race had clearly eluded her. However, when *encouraged to salvage respectability from* the wreckage, the bay barely closed down on the leading trio. Indeed, it was Seebe who finished strongly, her late rally sweeping her past Well Warned into second place.

Fallon was plainly annoyed with the apprentice, Peter Murphy, whose tactics aboard Blues Queen prevented him from switching to the outside. "He was just sitting there, waiting for I don't know what," the jockey said. "I had nowhere to go. When I got out Sleepytime finished full of running. I'm sure she would have won. She made up five lengths in two strides."

Fallon's last remark was undoubtedly wishful thinking borne of sheer frustration. Even when locked away, Sleepytime was hardly straining on the bit for a glimpse of freedom. And she did not exactly catch fire when, with more than a furlong remaining, she finally got out of the mess. In her defence, long-striding horses like her are never best suited to sprint finishes. She is capable of better, but the bookmakers were fully justified in extending her 1,000 Guineas odds to 5-1 from 2-1 — particularly as she looked far from convincing in the paddock.

Even though her trainer, Henry Cecil, described Sleepytime's predicament as "hopeless", he will surely be anxious to develop Yashmak and Reams Of Verse, stablemates of Sleepytime and both live candidates for the fillies' classic. Doubtless mindful of the lung infection afflicting some members of Cecil's string, the Tote went so far as to remove Sleepytime from its 1,000 Guineas ledger.

Sleepytime's eclipse means that Godolphin now handles both Guineas favourites. Just as Shamikh assumed the mantle on Bahhare's defection from the 2,000 Guineas, Moonlight Paradise, a 7-2 chance, now heads the list for the fillies' equivalent. Dance Parade, who best capitalised on Sleepytime's misfortune, enters the equation at 14-1.

The upshot is that punters face a nightmare assignment in unravelling the classics, to be contested at Newmarket next month. In each contest, four of the top six contenders will be making their seasonal debuts. After Sleepytime's troubles, one wonders about the fate awaiting Revoque in the Greenham Stakes today.

RESULTS FROM YESTERDAY'S THREE MEETINGS

Newbury

Going: good to firm

2.10 (5f 34yd) 1, Mujana (L Dettori, 9-2). 2, Fennel (50-1); 3, Chips (9-4 fav). 8 ran. NR: Livingstone. 2½l, hd. J Gosden. Tote: £4.40; £1.70, £6.00, £1.10. DF: £81.90. Trio: £176.80. CSF: £155.13.

2.40 (1m) 1, Amid Albadu (L Dettori, 9-1). 2, Peartree House (20-1). 3, Sword Arm (20-1). 4, Noble Dane (13-2). Maltool 4-1 fav. 18 ran. ¾l, 10l. J Dunlop. Tote: £6.20; £1.60, £3.70, £4.00, £1.60. DF: £130.30. Trio: £871.50. CSF: £163.58. Tricast: £3,275.93.

3.10 (7f 64yd) 1, Dance Parade (T Quinn, 16-1); 2, Seebe (5-1); 3, Well Warned (50-1). Sleepytime 4-7 fav. 10 ran. ¾l, ½l. P Cole. Tote: £15.40; £2.50, £1.90, £7.90. DF: £41.30. Trio: £222.80. CSF: £87.24.

3.40 (1m 3f 5yd) 1, Ghataas (R Hills, 7-2 fav, Richard Evans's nap). 2, Basman (100-1). 3, Redbridge (4-1). 18 ran. NR: Gee Bee Boy. ¾l, 2½l. J Dunlop. Tote: £3.50; £1.90, £38.40, £1.60. DF: £244.40. Trio: £400.90. CSF: £367.93.

4.10 (5f 34yd) 1, Repertory (R Perham, 50-1); 2, To The Roof (11-1). 3, Eastern Prophets (8-1). 4, That Man Again (14-1). Sea-Deer 3-1 fav. 20 ran. Sh hd, ¾l. M Saunders. Tote: £111.40; £14.00, £2.90, £2.30, £2.80. DF: £675.10. Trio: £1,853.40. CSF: £494.87. Tricast: £4,514.37.

4.40 (7f) 1, Kool Kat Katie (O Peslier, 2-1 fav). 2, Island Lore (12-1). 3, Selfish (7-1). 19 ran. 1l, 3½l. D Loder. Tote: £3.30; £1.80, £3.10, £3.80. DF: £38.00. Trio: £64.00. CSF: £26.04.

5.10 (2m) 1, Canon Can (K Fallon, 11-8 fav); 2, Top Cees (11-1). 3, Otto E Mezzo (33-1). 12 ran. 3l, ¾l. H Cecil. Tote: £2.50; £1.60, £3.10, £8.30. DF: £14.60. Trio: £294.40. CSF: £17.21. Tricast: £338.36.

Jackpot: not won (pool of £35,341.73 carried forward to Newbury today).

Placepot: £887.50. **Quadpot:** £191.30.

Ayr

Going: good

2.00 (3m 1f ch) 1, Chopwell Curtains (L Wyer, 11-2); 2, Solomon's Dancer (Evens fav); 3, Bear Claw (7-2). 9 ran. 2½l, 4l. T Easterby. Tote: £6.40; £2.10, £1.10, £1.40. DF: £4.70. Trio: £3.60. CSF: £9.04.

2.30 (2m 4f hdle) 1, Mahler (Mr J Goldstein, 14-1). 2, Morpheus (16-1). 3, Hardecent (16-1); 4, Nishamira (11-2 fav). 18 ran. 1l, ¾l. N Twiston-Davies. Tote: £19.90; £3.50, £2.80, £7.00, £2.30. DF: £111.70. Trio: £510.40. CSF: £209.24. Tricast: £3,321.85.

3.00 (2m hdle) 1, Marello (P Niven, 1-8 fav); 2, Donnington (9-1); 3, Penrose Lad (10-1). 8 ran. 1¾l, 15l. Mrs M Reveley. Tote: £1.20; £1.10, £1.60, £1.10. DF: £2.50. CSF: £2.15.

3.30 (2m 4f ch) 1, Destin d'Estruval (R Johnson, 7-1); 2, Destiny Calls (3-1 fav). 3, Leotard (12-1). 9 ran. 11l, nk. D Nicholson. Tote: £13.60; £3.50, £1.60, £3.20. DF: £14.10. Trio: £249.50. CSF: £25.84. Tricast: £224.04.

4.00 (3m 2f 110yd hdle) 1, Meditator (S Curran, 100-1); 2, Nirvana Prince (16-1). 3, Erzadjan (10-1). Young Kenny 7-2 fav. 13 ran. ¾l, 5l. B De Haan. Tote: £113.70; £11.30, £3.90, £3.60. DF: £1,300.40. Trio: £602.10. CSF: £1,159.60. Tricast: £14,712.16.

4.30 (3m 3f 110yd ch) 1, Jigtime (Mr M Bradburne, 4-7 fav). 2, Royal Jester (11-2). 3, Southern Minstrel (25-1). 7 ran. 2½l, 12l. J Hughes. Tote: £1.60; £1.10, £1.70. DF: £2.50. CSF: £3.97.

5.00 (1m 2f flat) 1, Supertop (Mr B Gibson, 20-1); 2, Captain Marmalade (25-1); 3, Forzair (12-1); 4, Hand Of Straw (100-1). Flyaway Blues 9-2 fav. 20 ran. 1¼l, hd. L Lungo. Tote: £61.90; £7.10, £6.10, £3.00, £20.90. DF: £1,374.80. Trio: not won. CSF: £427.90. Tricast: £5,639.23.

Placepot: £130.60. **Quadpot:** £61.10.

Thirsk

Going: good to firm, good in places

2.20 (6f) 1, Divine Miss-P (W J O'Connor, 8-1); 2, Two On The Bridge (9-2); 3, Prince Of Parkes (14-1). Truly Parched 3-4 fav. 9 ran. NR: Jonny's Joker. Nk, 2l. A Jarvis. Tote: £16.80; £2.70, £1.10, £2.60. DF: £17.10. Trio: £51.60. CSF: £36.45.

2.50 (5f) 1, Penniless (J Weaver, 6-1); 2, Out Like Magic (5-2); 3, Antonia's Double (9-4 fav). 7 ran. Hd, 1l. N Tinkler. Tote: £9.40; £3.10, £2.10. DF: £7.40. CSF: £22.11.

3.20 (5f) 1, Lamarita (J Tate, 5-1). 2, Lunar Mist (12-1). 3, Malibu Man (11-4 fav). 9 ran. 2l, sh hd. J Eustace. Tote: £6.60; £1.70, £2.00, £1.80. DF: £54.90. Trio: £40.70. CSF: £64.37.

3.50 (1m 4f) 1, Regait (P Bloomfield, 14-1). 2, Percy Isle (10-11 fav). 3, Surtsey (11-10). 4 ran. 2½l, 8l. M Jarvis. Tote: £12.20. DF: £7.60. CSF: £26.03.

4.20 (1m) 1, Paint It Black (Alex Greaves, 16-1). 2, Dispol Gem (6-1); 3, Riccarton (16-1); 4, Godmersham Park (16-1). Eurobox Boy 5-2 fav. 18 ran. ¾l, nk. D Nicholls. Tote: £20.70; £3.60, £2.00, £5.50, £6.80. DF: £50.30. Trio: £304.20. CSF: £114.28. Tricast: £1,497.73.

4.50 (7f) 1, Meranti (R Ffrench, 2-1 fav). 2, Forst (5-1). 3, Naughty Pistol (14-1). 4, Gulf Shaadi (10-1). 16 ran. 1½l, nk. J Bradley. Tote: £4.70; £1.20, £1.80, £2.50, £2.70. DF: £7.50. Trio: £156.00. CSF: £12.33. Tricast: £129.97.

Placepot: £2,947.60. **Quadpot:** £412.70.

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Peanuts Pet takes up long distance challenge

Point-to-point
by Carl Evans

THE North-South divide gets an airing at the **Worcestershire** meeting today when the men's open, for the Lady Dudley Cup, provides a race rich in potential.

Yorkshire's Peanuts Pet is the long-distance traveller, and great credit is due to the Walmsley family for taking up the challenge. They will not lack support since Carol Walmsley, the wife of rider Robert, is the daughter of Worcestershire trainer John Yardley.

Sadly, the pride of the South, The Bounder, misses the race because of a foot infection, although Joe Tizzard has an excellent spare ride in Double Thriller, an impressive young stable companion of Double Silk.

Julian Pritchard is a prize asset for the Caroline Spearing-trained Minella Express and Grimley Gale, who won in a good time last week, has a chance if the watered ground is not too soft.

Spice is added when horses from different regions take each other on but this is one for the South. Still In Business is the highest rated horse in the race and Tim Mitchell is an exceptional rider. They can ensure that owner Richard Williams collects the cup.

Mitchell and Jamie Jukes raised their title hopes when riding doubles at the Tiverton meeting on Wednesday. Trainer Victor Dartnall saddled a treble to underline his yard's good form and he could run last season's champion pointer, Phar Too Touchy, at *the* **Dartmoor** today.

TODAY'S MEETINGS: Bedale & W of Yore at Hornby Castle, south of Catterick (first race 2.00); Dartmoor, Flete Park, 10m E of Plymouth (2.00); Essex & Suffolk, Higham, 7m NE of Colchester (2.00); Holcombe Harriers, Whittington, 2m S of Kirkby Lonsdale (2.00); Old Surrey & Burstow, Penshurst, 3m S of town (2.00); Pentyrch, Bonvilston, 4m W of Cardiff (2.00); S & W Wilts, Larkhill, 5m NW of Amesbury (2.00); Worcs, Chaddesley Corbett, between Kidderminster and Bromsgrove (2.00).
TOMORROW: Axe Vale at Stafford Cross, 3m W of Seaton (1.30); Grafton, Mollington, 6m N of Banbury (2.00); Heydon, Hexham, inside NH course (1.30); Meynell & S Staffs, Sandon, 4m S of Stone (2.00); Pembrokes, Lydstep, 3m SW of Tenby (2.00); Quorn, Garthorpe, 6m E of Melton Mowbray (2.15). **WEDNESDAY:** Cotswold at Andoversford, 6m E of Cheltenham (5.15).

THIRSK

THUNDERER
2.20 Ellenbrook. 2.50 Surprise Mission. 3.20 Venture Capitalist. 3.50 Pearl Venture. 4.20 Starborough. 4.50 Carreamia. 5.20 Cashmere Lady.

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM (GOOD IN PLACES) SIS
DRAW: 5F-6F, HIGH NUMBERS BEST

2.20 KNAYTON CLAIMING STAKES
(2-Y-O: £2,653: 5f) (12 runners)

1 43 CAPTAIN BLISS 8 (G,BF) N Tinkler 9-3 Aimee Cook (5) 2
2 TOLL'S TIMES M W Easterby 9-3 Dale Gibson 5
3 WAIT'N SEE M W Easterby 9-3 T Lucas 9
4 CRAFTY PET P Haslam 8-12 A Culhane 1
5 04 MY BET M W Easterby 8-12 G Parkin (5) 4
6 CARNATION KING N G M Turner 8-9 R Havlin (3) 3
7 0 SKIPPOOL CREEK 14 T Easterby 8-8 M Birch 11
8 0 DIAMOND STEVE 10 (V) P Evans 8-7 J F Egan 12
9 0 GENERAL JOEY 6 M Dods 8-7 C Teague (3) 8
10 5 ELLENBROOK 14 J Berry 8-6 K Darley 10
11 0 DAYMABEE 14 N Tinkler 8-2 Kim Tinkler 7
12 FLEA IN YOUR EAR M Meade 7-10 L Charnock 6

3-1 My Bet, 7-2 Captain Bliss, 5-1 Ellenbrook, 7-1 Flea In Your Ear, Carnation King, 10-1 Daymabee, 12-1 others.

2.50 THOMAS LORD HANDICAP (£7,668: 5f) (21)

1 030- SWYNFORD DREAM 175 (D,F,G) J Bottomley 4-9-13 J Lowe 13
2 211- STUFFED 178 (CD,F,G) M W Easterby 5-9-12 G Parkin (5) 16
3 500- TWICE AS SHARP 182 (D,F,G) P Harris 5-9-11 G Hind 18
4 350- FOR THE PRESENT 210 (F,G) T Barron 7-9-10 K Darley 15
5 30-0 ZIGGY'S DANCER 19 (D,F,G) E Alston 6-9-8 G Duffield 1
6 0-44 SWINO 21 (D,F) P Evans 3-9-6 J F Egan 12
7 0-31 SURPRISE MISSION 19 (D,F,G) Mrs J Ramsden 5-9-3 S Drowne 21
8 40-5 TUSCAN DAWN 22 (CD,BF,F,G,S) J Berry 7-9-2 P Roberts (5) 17
9 6051 CHEMCAST 23 (B,D,F,G,S) J Eyre 4-9-1 R Lappin 6
10 112- JUST BOB 337 (C,D,F,G,S) S Kettlewell 8-9-0 Jenny Benson (7) 7
11 210- BOWLERS BOY 169 (D,F) J Quinn 4-8-13 T Williams 4
12 25-0 INSIDER TRADER 25 (D,F,G) Mrs J Ramsden 6-8-12 M Deering 19
13 300- ROYAL DOME 189 (D,F,G) M Wane 5-8-12 J Carroll 20
14 2120 SQUIRE CORRIE 26 (D,F,G) D Chapman 5-8-11 A Culhane 11
15 5500 [illegible] FLYER 24 (D,F,G) D Arbuthnot 4-8-11 G Carter 9
16 40-0 LADY SHERIFF 3 (B,CD,F,G) M W Easterby 6-8-9 J Quinn 3
17 0-50 CROSS THE BORDER 11 (CD,F) D Nicholls 4-8-4 Iona Wands (7) 2
18 50-0 BLESSINGINDISGUISE 25 (D,G) M W Easterby 4-8-3 T Lucas 5
19 000- HERE COMES A STAR 178 (C,D,F,G) J Carr 9-8-1 L Charnock 14
20 4042 CAPTAIN CARAT 19 (D,F,G) D Nicholls 6-8-1 Dale Gibson 10
21 0-40 GORETSKI 11 (D,F,G) N Tinkler 4-7-11 Kim Tinkler 8

5-1 Surprise Mission, 7-1 Stuffed, [illegible], 8-1 Captain Carat, Just Bob, Chemcast, 10-1 Squire Corrie, Insider Trader, 12-1 others.

3.20 MICHAEL FOSTER MEMORIAL CONDITIONS STAKES (£6,509: 6f) (6)

1 50-0 SEA DANE 15 (D,F) P Harris 4-9-7 G Hind 1
2 00-5 VENTURE CAPITALIST 28 (CD,F,G) D Nicholls 8-9-7 Alex Greaves 2
3 50-4 WESTCOURT MAGIC 14 (CD,F) M W Easterby 4-9-7 L Charnock 4
4 1202 CRETAN GIFT 14 (B,D,F,G) N Littmoden 6-9-0 T G McLaughlin 6
5 35-0 WATCH ME 19 (D,BF,G) R Hannon 4-8-12 J Carroll 3
6 104- JHAZI 175 (F) D Loder 3-8-6 K Darley 8
7 215- SOVIET STATE 141 (D,S) P Chapple-Hyam 3-8-6 R Havlin (3) 5
8 150- YOUNG BIGWIG 217 (D,F,G) J Berry 3-8-3 G Carter 7

5-4 Jhazi, 3-1 Soviet State, 7-2 Venture Capitalist, 5-1 Westcourt Magic, 10-1 Cretan Gift, Watch Me, 12-1 others.

3.50 RACING CHANNEL LIMITED STAKES
(£2,860: 1m 4f) (8)

1 -400 FAIRY KNIGHT 19 (D,F,G) R Hannon 5-9-10 K Darley 4
2 145- CONTRAFIRE 158J (D,F,G) Mrs A Swinbank 5-9-9 J Supple 6
3 C5-3 DESERT FIGHTER 15J (F,G) Mrs M Reveley 6-9-8 A Culhane 2
4 50- KAITAK 142 (S) J Carr 6-9-8 L Charnock 7
5 50-0 LOOKINGFORARAINBOW 19 (CD,F) Bob Jones 9-9-8 M Wigham 5
6 00 SLASHER JACK 10 (D,F,G) D Nicholls 6-9-8 Alex Greaves 1
7 000- PEARL VENTURE 159 (F,S) S Woods 5-9-5 D Biggs 3
8 40-5 NILE VALLEY 19 P Chapple-Hyam 3-7-13 R Cody-Boutcher (7) 8

9-4 Desert Fighter, 3-1 Nile Valley, 5-1 Contrafire, 6-1 Fairy Knight, Pearl Venture, 8-1 Slasher Jack, 10-1 others.

4.20 THIRSK CLASSIC TRIAL CONDITIONS STAKES (3-Y-O: £10,486: 1m) (3)

1 211- INTIKHAB 175 (F) D Morley 9-5 G Carter 1
2 522- CAVIAR ROYALE 250 (F) T Barron 9-0 J Carroll 2
3 134- STARBOROUGH 177 (C,G) D Loder 9-0 K Darley 3

10-11 Starborough, 7-4 Intikhab, 5-1 Caviar Royale

4.50 BYLAND RATING RELATED MAIDEN STAKES
(£2,723: 7f) (11)

1 50- STAR OF RING 372 M Heaton-Ellis 4-9-10 S Drowne 4
2 530- CARREAMIA 159 J Eyre 4-9-7 O Pears (3) 1
3 00C- HADADABBLE 152 Pat Mitchell 4-9-7 M Fenton 3
4 3305 HAZEL 35 Miss G Kelleway 5-9-7 R Smith (7) 2
5 5-00 SANTELLA KATIE 100 Mrs L Stubbs 4-9-7 M Rimmer 11
6 -043 SERAPE 14 Mrs L Stubbs 4-9-7 J F Egan 7
7 0-04 SWISS COAST 17 N Tinkler 3-8-11 K Darley 6
8 600- BEWITCHING LADY 175 D Arbuthnot 3-8-8 G Carter 10
9 050- DANCE MELODY 159 G Oldroyd 3-8-8 R Farmer (7) 5
10 040- HONG KONG EXPRESS 231 J Berry 3-8-8 P Fessey (5) 8
11 35-0 RI GOOD NICK 8 (B) M W Easterby 3-8-8 G Parkin (5) 9

11-4 Ri Good Nick, 7-2 Carreamia, 5-1 Hong Kong Express, Bewitching Lady, 7-1 Hazel, 8-1 Swiss Coast, 10-1 others

5.20 LEVY BOARD FILLIES HANDICAP
(£3,730: 1m) (15)

1 254- BLESSED SPIRIT 194 (D,F) C Wall 4-10-0 A Culhane 12
2 -101 ANGEL FACE 7 (F,G) P Evans 4-9-10 J F Egan 13
3 0.0- *CRISSEM 360 (F) R Hollinshead 4-9-8 F Lynch (3) 7*
4 00-1 SYLVAN PRINCESS 16 (D,F) D Cosgrove 4-9-5 M Rimmer 14
5 3-00 CASHMERE LADY 29 (D,G) J Eyre 5-9-4 R Lappin 11
6 0610 THREE ARCH BRIDGE 14 (B,D,BF,F,G) M Johnston 5-9-1 D McKeown 3
7 0-00 LA VOLTA 14 (F) J Fitzgerald 4-9-1 J Quinn 15
8 10-6 BEST OF ALL 9 (B,D,F,G,S) J Berry 5-8-12 K Darley 5
9 34-6 PERFECT POPPY 45 J Fanshawe 3-8-9 N Varley 6
10 200- CHORUS SONG 175 P Chapple-Hyam 3-8-6 R Havlin (3) 4
11 350- LILLIBELLA 215 Mrs J Ramsden 4-8-5 S Drowne 2
12 15-0 LEGEND OF ARAGON 11 (G) J Glover 3-8-1 G Duffield 8
13 0-64 MARSH MARIGOLD 88 (BF,S) J Hetherton 3-7-10 L Charnock 1
14 1550 BALLARD LADY 33 (D,G,S) J Wainwright 5-7-10 J Bramhill (5) 10
15 2341 DIAMOND EYRE 57 (G) J Eyre 3-7-10 R Mullen (5) 9

4-1 Angel Face, 5-1 Sylvan Princess, 6-1 Blessed Spirit, 7-1 Three Arch Bridge, 8-1 Cashmere Lady, Lillibella, 10-1 La Volta, 12-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: D Loder, 4 winners from 11 runners, 36.4%; J Fanshawe, 5 from 19, 26.3%; W G M Turner, 3 from 14, 21.4%; D Morley, 3 from 16, 18.8%; M Johnston, 16 from 87, 18.4%.

JOCKEYS: M Fenton, 4 winners from 11 rides, 36.4%; G Duffield, 16 from 80, 20.0%; D McKeown, 13 from 100, 13.0%; G Carter, 7 from 55, 12.7%; O Pears, 4 from 33, 12.1%.

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Ayr: 1.55 Shu Gaa, 4.05 Buckhouse Boy, Killeshin, 4.40 No Pain No Gain. Bangor: 2.10 Persian Elite. Stratford: 4.35 Lord Kilton. Thirsk: 2.20 Captain Bliss, Diamond Steve.

BANGOR

THUNDERER
2.40 Cherokee Chief. 2.40 My Nominee. 3.10 Indian Jockey. 3.45 Hooded Hawk. 4.15 Quite A Man. 4.45 Orange Ragusa. 5.15 Kierchem.

Carl Evans: 2.40 Press For Action. 4.45 Orange Ragusa.

GOING: GOOD SIS

2.10 CREWE NOVICES HURDLE
(£2,948: 2m 4f) (18 runners)

1 -01U NORTHERN STAR 18 (F,G) J Pickering 6-11-6 Miss J Wormall (7)
2 431 PERSIAN ELITE 25 (B,G) C Egerton 6-11-6 J R Kavanagh
3 231 RING OF VISION 19 (F) C Mann 5-11-6 J Railton
4 10 SPECIAL BEAT 65 (D,S) N Henderson 5-11-1 Mr C Vigors (5)
5 5-32 CHEROKEE CHIEF 51 (BF) O Sherwood 6-11-0 J A McCarthy
6 P COOL CAT 52 J Tuck 6-11-0 V Slattery
7 4200 GOWER-SLAVE 36 P Bowen 5-11-0 W Marston
8 00 JEMARO 63 W Jenks 6-11-0 T Jenks
9 0 ONE BOY 25 A Harvey 5-11-0 P Holley
10 /P0P ORINOCO VENTURE 48P A Bailey 6-11-0 T Kent
11 PHARMONY Mrs S Smith 7-11-0 G F Ryan (5)
12 000 SOUNDPOST 130 Mrs L Williamson 5-11-0 Mr A Wood
13 -400 THE CROOKED OAK 88 N Twiston-Davies 5-11-0 D Walsh
14 /00- THE NAUGHTY VICAR 453 G Richards 7-11-0 R Guest
15 WESTERN SUN J Needham 7-11-0 A Bates (5)
16 6035 ASK ME IN 132 T Wall 6-10-9 M Foster
17 DUNSTON KNIGHT 186F B Preece 4-10-7 J Mogford (7)
18 3P00 KHALIKHOUM 35 Sir John Barlow Bt 4-10-7 D J Kavanagh (5)

6-4 Cherokee Chief, 4-1 Ring Of Vision, 5-1 Persian Elite, 6-1 others.

2.40 ROBERT JONES 21ST OPEN HUNTERS CHASE (*Amateurs*: £1,690: 2m 4f 110yd) (11)

1 BP04 KING OF SHADOWS 18 (G) Miss C Carden 10-12-7 S Prior (7)
2 4P21 MY NOMINEE 10 (B,CD,F,G,S) D Nicholls 9-12-7 R Burton (7)
3 3F-P RATHER SHARP 13P (F,S) S Watson 11-12-7 B Pollock (5)
4 00F4 CHARLIES DELIGHT 31 (B,S) Mrs C Hicks 9-12-0 C Vigors (5)
5 1/23 DALAMETRE 14 (BF,G,S) M Evans 10-12-0 M Munrowd (7)
6 P2P3 GALZIG 19 (G) Mrs D Turner 9-12-0 W Tellwright (7)
7 552- NADIAD 502 (F,G) D McCain 11-12-0 A Wintle (7)
8 /232 PRESS FOR ACTION 13P (F,G) S Shirley-Beavan 12-12-0 R Ford (5)
9 P2F6 SAAHI 13P (G,S) J Swindells 8-12-0 Miss S Swindells (7)
10 32-6 SIMPLY PERFECT 31 (G) J Swindells 11-12-0 Miss K Swindells (7)
11 -P6P THORNHILL 18P F Matthews 7-11-9 Mr A Wood (7)

4-6 My Nominee, 7-1 Dalametre, 8-1 Press For Action, 10-1 others.

3.10 HALLIWELL LANDAU NOVICES CHASE
(£4,202: 2m 1f 110yd) (6)

1 5111 INDIAN JOCKEY 45 (CD,F,G,S) M Pipe 5-11-11 D Walsh
2 0023 EXEMPLAR 26 (BF,F,G) Mrs S Smith 9-11-0 G F Ryan (5)
3 5/4- STEEL GOLD 385 T Kinsey 7-11-0 Mr R Burton (7)
4 5F2P THE SECRET GREY 38 D McCain 6-11-0 T Jenks
5 P3 DEE LIGHT 28 G Richards 8-10-9 R Guest
6 6305 EUROLINK SHADOW 26 D McCain 5-10-7 V Slattery

4-9 Indian Jockey, 5-1 Dee Light, 6-1 Exemplar, 14-1 others

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: Miss C Saunders, 5 winners from 7 runners, 71.4%; D Nicholls, 3 from 8, 37.5%; C Brooks, 6 from 18, 33.3%.

JOCKEYS: T Dascombe, 3 winners from 13 rides, 23.1%; R Guest, 6 from 37, 16.2%; W Marston, 8 from 50, 16.0%

STRATFORD

THUNDERER
2.35 Shekels. 3.05 Polden Pride. 3.35 Palladium Boy. 4.05 Father Sky. 4.35 Candle Glow. 5.05 Stapleford Lady. 5.35 Mountain Path.

Carl Evans: 4.35 Candle Glow.

GOING: GOOD (GOOD TO FIRM IN PLACES) SIS

2.35 JENKINSONS NOVICES HURDLE
(Div I: £1,744: 2m 6f 110yd) (11 runners)

1 -341 SHEKELS 35 (G) C Brooks 6-11-4 G Bradley
2 346/ BECK AND CALL 735 Miss V Williams 8-10-12 G Upton
3 0 FREELINE FONTAINE 58 N Henderson 5-10-12 M A Fitzgerald
4 00 GREEN KING 56 A Jones 5-10-12 D Carey (7)
5 564 IRISH DELIGHT 119 R Curtis 5-10-12 D Morris
6 0-R0 MILL BAY SAM 42 Mrs M Jones 6-10-12 Derek Byrne
7 OCCOLD 6 Hubbard 6-10-12 D Gallagher
8 0/0 SIDNEY 32 J McConnochie 8-10-12 S Wynne
9 PP FINAL ROSE 19 R Smith 7-10-7 Mr J Goldstein (7)
10 0 ISIS DAWN 44 A Newcombe 5-10-7 P Henley (3)
11 MARLIES GOHR T Clement 5-10-7 L Aspell (3)

6-4 Shekels, 6-1 Beck And Call, Freeline Fontaine, Occold, 8-1 Irish Delight, 10-1 Green King, Mill Bay Sam, 12-1 others

3.05 LAURENT-PERRIER *HANDICAP CHASE*
(£4,133: 2m 4f) (9)

1 U002 CALLISOE BAY 18 (C,BF,F,G,S) O Sherwood 8-11-10 G Bradley
2 34PU AROUND THE HORN 40 (D,G,S) J Gifford 10-11-9 S McNeill
3 -S0U BORO VACATION 176 (D,F,G) P Nicholls 8-11-5 K Gaule
4 F120 SUPER COIN 37 (F,S) R Lee 9-10-11 P Henley (3)
5 2221 POLDEN PRIDE 7 (F) G Balding 9-10-9 B Clifford
6 222F PHILIP'S WOODY 73 (C,D,F,G,S) N Henderson 9-10-6 M A Fitzgerald
7 P313 OVER THE POLE 35 (G) P Cheesbrough 10-10-1 D Forth (3)
8 F223 HIGH ALLTITUDE 29 (BF,G,S) M Heaton-Ellis 9-10-0 D Gallagher
9 12F5 MERRY PANTO 77 (D,BF,F,G) C Brooks 8-10-0 C Rafter (7)

7-2 Polden Pride, 4-1 Callisoe Bay, 5-1 Around The Horn, 6-1 Super Coin, Philip's Woody, 8-1 High Altitude, 10-1 Merry Panto, 12-1 others

3.35 RICHARDSONS PARKWAY NOVICES HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,360: 2m 110yd) (17)

1 1P1P RITTO 38 (BF,S) J Neville 7-11-13 R Massey
2 0363 SCHNOZZLE 35 K Bridgwater 6-11-7 G Bradley
3 2450 BALLY PARSON 80 (F,G) R Dickin 11-11-2 D Leahy
4 61PF MILLING BROOK 19 (G) J Bradley 5-11-1 D Gallagher
5 0802 SNOWSHILL SHAKER 45 N Twiston-Davies 8-11-0 R Bellamy
6 640- NAHLA 376 (S) B De Haan 7-11-0 S McNeill
7 0P66 PALLADIUM BOY 49 Mrs J Retter 7-10-13 M A Fitzgerald
8 05P1 *REVERSE THRUST 19 (F) P Hedger 6-10-12 M Clinton (7)*
9 066U ZESTI 19 (G) T Clement 5-10-9 L Aspell (3)
10 -P52 KETCHICAN 16 S Knight 5-10-6 S Anderson
11 5003 FENCER'S QUEST 18 T Forster 4-10-6 S Wynne
12 P43P ANOTHER COMEDY 19 R Lee 7-10-0 P Henley (3)
13 0064 DAYDREAM BELIEVER 17 M Salaman 5-10-0 B Clifford
14 P-0P SERIOUS OPTION 58 R Curtis 6-10-0 D Morris
15 0PU4 AQUA AMBER 19 J Bradley 5-10-0 W McFarland
16 0555 ALPHA LEATHER 18 L Grassick 6-10-0 Mr J Grassick
17 P541 ANIF 19 (D,F) J Joseph 6-10-0 Mr J Goldstein (7)

7-2 Snowshill Shaker, 6-1 Schnozzle, 7-1 Ritto, 8-1 Fencer's Quest, Milling Brook, Reverse Thrust, 10-1 Nahla, 12-1 others

4.05 STRATFORD-ON-AVON NOVICES CHASE
(£4,419: 3m) (9)

1 1113 FATHER SKY 18 (B,D,BF,F,G) O Sherwood 6-11-8 G Bradley
2 3U11 DOMAINE DE PRON 17 (CD,F,G) Mrs L Taylor 6-11-3 R Bellamy
3 U-14 MASTER TOBY 24 (D,G) N Twiston-Davies 7-11-3 Mr J Goldstein (7)
4 -1PP MELNIK 68 (BF,G,S) Mrs A Perrett 6-11-3 G Upton
5 FP5 BIG ARCHIE 77 (F) Mrs A Bowlby 7-10-12 D Leahy
6 3 DEBONAIR DUDE 35 (BF) N Henderson 7-10-12 M A Fitzgerald
7 352- HI HEDLEY 378 (F) G Hubbard 7-10-12 D Gallagher
8 0-02 LITTLE ELLIOT 21 (BF,G) S Earle 9-10-12 L Aspell (3)
9 2006 JOY FOR LIFE 28 R Strange 6-10-7 S Wynne

11-4 Father Sky, 3-1 Melnik, 9-2 Master Toby, 7-1 Debonair Dude, 8-1 Domaine De Pron, Hi Hedley, 14-1 others.

4.35 RICHARDSONS STAR SITE HUNTERS CHASE (Amateurs: £2,038: 2m 5f 110yd) (16)

1 FPP-P TUDOR FABLE 21P (G,S) C Sweeting 9-12-10 Rupert Sweeting (7)
2 -142 TUFFNUT GEORGE 19 (F,G,S) Mrs P Grainger 10-12-10 A Phillips (7)
3 -213 FOX POINTER 10 (BF,F,S) Mrs L Evans 12-12-7 O McPhail (7)
4 44F3 ABBOTSHAM 15 (F,G,S) O Carter 12-12-0 J Goldstein (7)
5 U143 EASTERN PLEASURE 21P (G,S) I Emmerson 10-12-0 T J Barry (7)
6 *04-U EMERALD RULER 42P (G,S) A Peachey 10-12-0 J Trice-Rolph (5)*
7 2052 ERLEMO 21P (B,S) Miss S George 8-12-0 P Pritchard (7)
8 24-P FRANK BE LUCKY 18 (D,G,S) Ms B Ashby-Jones 11-12-0 R Walley (7)
9 RPP- LORD KILTON 327P (B) Mrs D Cowley 9-12-0 M Cowley (7)
10 00-P MANKIND 49P J de Giles 6-12-0 L Baker (7)
11 UU3P PRINZAL 19 (D,F,G,S) G McCourt 10-12-0 M Armytage
12 3PU3 PRO BONO 18 (D,F,G) A Morgan 7-12-0 A Sansome (5)
13 /PPP SECRET CASTLE 19P (F) Mrs L Love 9-12-0 L Brown (7)
14 -P1P STAR OATS 24 (F,G,S) Mrs R Lampard 11-12-0 A Kinane (7)
15 -U46 TELLAPORKY 24 T Hind 8-12-0 A Middleton (7)
16 14-4 CANDLE GLOW 10 (F,S) P Hutchinson 9-11-9 P Hutchinson (7)

5-2 Tuffnut George, 3-1 Fox Pointer, 5-1 Star Oats, 7-1 Prinzal, 8-1 Candle Glow, *10-1 Pro Bono, 12-1 others.*

5.05 RICHARDSONS MERLIN PARK MARES ONLY HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,034: 2m 110yd) (6)

1 2412 BARFORD SOVEREIGN 17 (D,F,G) J Fanshawe 5-12-0 M A Fitzgerald
2 5012 HANDY LASS 4 (D,F,G,S) J Smith 8-11-1 Mr O McPhail (7)
3 2306 STAPLEFORD LADY 9 (D,F) J Moore 9-10-0 S McNeill
4 4241 SIBERIAN MYSTIC 40 (CD,G) P Murphy 4-10-0 W McFarland
5 P1 SECRET GIFT 21 (B,F) Mrs J Pitman 4-10-0 D Leahy
6 0P01 DAILY SPORT GIRL 5 (CD,F,G,S) B Llewellyn 8-10-0 (7ex) Mr J L Llewellyn

9-4 Barford Sovereign, 11-4 Secret Gift, 3-1 Siberian Mystic, 6-1 others.

5.35 JENKINSONS NOVICES HURDLE
(Div II: £1,744: 2m 6f 110yd) (11)

1 31 MOUNTAIN PATH 52 (S) N Henderson 7-11-4 M A Fitzgerald
2 -231 SUPREME FLYER 33 (G) K Bailey 7-11-4 Mr R Wakley (7)
3 0- ABOVE THE CLOUDS 381 Miss A Newton-Smith 6-10-12 P Henley (3)
4 P5-2 ARMATEUR 38 J McConnochie 9-10-12 D Leahy
5 40-0 FEARLESS HUSSAR 17 C Jackson 7-10-12 N Mann
6 0/ FOOLS FUTURE 906 Mrs J Retter 8-10-12 D Gallagher
7 LORD COOL C Brooks 6-10-12 G Bradley
8 PAT BUCKLEY N Twiston-Davies 6-10-12 Mr J Goldstein (7)
9 4004 WILLOWS ROULETTE 66 A Hobbs 5-10-12 R Greene
10 CLOUDY HOUSE 42P N Lampard 8-10-7 Mr L Baker (7)
11 622/ SKY BURST 723 Miss V Williams 7-10-7 G Upton

7-4 Mountain Path, 5-2 Supreme Flyer, 7-1 Pat Buckley, 10-1 others

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: Mrs L Taylor, 3 winners from 4 runners, 75.0%; P Nicholls, 8 from 23, 34.8%; O Sherwood, 9 from 29, 31.0%; N Henderson, 4 from 19, 21.1%

JOCKEYS: S Wynne, 10 winners from 34 rides, 29.4%; R Greene, 4 from 25, 16.0%; G Bradley, 5 from 35, 14.3%; S McNeill, 8 from 70, 11.4%.

3.45 SOTHEBY'S HANDICAP HURDLE
(£3,648: 3m) (16)

1 60/ PRIME DISPLAY 1116 (D,G,S) A Harvey 11-11-10 T Jenks
2 -314 CUTTHROAT KID 19 (F,G) T Greathead 7-11-4 P Holley
3 0002 PRUSSIA 28 (F) W Clay 6-11-0 Guy Lewis (3)
4 4P53 HOODED HAWK 50 (G) N Henderson 6-11-0 J R Kavanagh
5 4FP/ FED ON OATS 1099 (S) Miss V Williams 9-10-13 J Railton
6 1044 PHARARE 46 (CD,F,S) R Woodhouse 7-10-11 D J Kavanagh (5)
7 1600 BETTER BYTHE GLASS 51 (D,F,G,S) N Twiston-Davies 8-10-4 D Walsh
8 2312 FIRST CRACK 10 (BF,F,G,S) F Jordan 12-10-3 T Eley
9 PP42 LAYHAM LOW 18 (F) O Sherwood 6-10-3 J A McCarthy
10 U041 SHARP COMMAND 7 (F) P Eccles 4-10-2 R Guest
11 0333 TIGER CLAW 21 (F,G) A Hobbs 11-10-0 Mr G Shenkin (7)
12 P006 MILL THYME 37 (F,G) P Beaumont 5-10-0 M Foster
13 0064 DERRING BRIDGE 19 (D,F,S) Mrs S Johnson 7-10-0 W Marston
14 -026 THIS NETTLE DANGER 31 (D,F) O Brennan 13-10-0 M Brennan
15 4060 OLD CAVALIER 70 J J O'Neill 6-10-0 J Callaghan
16 P-P0 KANO WARRIOR 38 (D,F) B Preece 10-10-0 J Mogford (7)

3-1 Sharp Command, 7-2 Hooded Hawk, 7-1 First Crack, 8-1 Pharare, 10-1 Layham Low, Tiger Claw, 12-1 others

4.15 BROOKES BELL NOVICES HANDICAP CHASE
(£3,599: 2m 4f 110yd) (10)

1 P111 QUITE A MAN 18 (D,F,S) S Brookshaw 9-12-0 Mr R Burton (7)
2 -134 HARVEST VIEW 35 (D,F,G,S) C Brooks 7-11-7 M Berry (7)
3 42P1 FRONTIER FLIGHT 128 (F,G) Miss L Siddall 7-10-4 E Husband (3)
4 P-0P LIBERTARIAN 71 O Sherwood 7-10-2 J A McCarthy
5 3UP2 CURRAGH PETER 25 Mrs P Bickerton 10-10-0 Guy Lewis (3)
6 3342 KILTULLA 19 Mrs S Smith 7-10-0 G F Ryan (5)
7 2452 WINNOW 17 A Turnell 7-10-0 C Rae
8 5563 ALASKAN HEIR 19 (V,G,S) A Streeter 6-10-0 T Eley
9 3624 HEATHYARDS BOY 19 (B,G,S) D McCain 7-10-0 D Walsh
10 0-6F ALTHREY BLUE 68 A Turnell 8-10-0 M Foster

11-4 Quite A Man, 4-1 Harvest View, 5-1 Kiltulla, 6-1 Winnow, Frontier Flight, 10-1 Curragh Peter, 14-1 others.

4.45 JANE McALPINE MEMORIAL *HUNTERS* CHASE (Amateurs: £1,616: 3m 110yd) (9)

1 221 FAIR CROSSING 21P (F,G,S) Mrs T Hill 11-12-7 M Emmanuel (7)
2 -1PF HIGHWAY FIVE 15 (CD,G,S) Lady Susan Brooke 9-12-7 Miss E James (7)
3 -2P2 AVOSTAR 21 (D,G,S) Miss C Saunders 10-12-4 B Pollock (5)
4 P21U JUPITER MOON 3 (F,G,S) Mrs C Hicks 8-12-4 C Vigors (5)
5 /0-1 FIBREGUIDE TECH 19P (D,F,G) T Kinsey 14-12-0 R Thomas (7)
6 3212 MR BUSKER 13P (F,S) P Morris 8-12-0 C J B Barlow (7)
7 4211 NODFORM WONDER 13P (F,G,S) R Bevis 10-12-0 R Bevis (7)
8 /113 ORANGE RAGUSA 29 (F,G,S) S Shirley-Beavan 11-12-0 R Ford (5)
9 154P ORTON HOUSE 35 (F,G) S Kelly 10-12-0 R Burton (7)

4-1 Nodform Wonder, 5-1 Orange Ragusa, Fair Crossing, Avostar, 6-1 Jupiter Moon, 7-1 Fibreguide Tech, 8-1 Mr Busker, 10-1 others

5.15 EMRAL HANDICAP HURDLE
(£2,853: 2m 1f) (14)

1 5411 HAMADRYAD 178 (F,G) Mrs V Ward 9-12-0 J R Kavanagh
2 4233 NEWHALL PRINCE 19 (F,G) A Streeter 9-11-6 T Eley
3 6445 INNOCENT GEORGE 52 (D,F,G) Miss L Siddall 8-11-3 M Foster
4 6034 NEVER SO BLUE 19 (F) P Bradley 6-11-2 D J Kavanagh (5)
5 0P15 EVEZIO RUFO 10 (B,F) N Littmoden 5-11-2 D Walsh
6 2514 *SHIFT AGAIN 93 (B,D,S) O Sherwood 5-11-1 Sophie Mitchell (3)*
7 FF11 CARACOL 38 (D,G,S) J Neville 8-10-8 T Dascombe
8 5051 KIERCHEM 19 (G) C Grant 6-10-7 J Callaghan
9 2030 AJDAR 21 (G) O Brennan 6-10-6 M Brennan
10 0302 THE BREWER 19 J Tuck 5-10-5 W Marston
11 6605 MAPLETON 21 Mrs S Smith 4-10-4 R Guest
12 0060 NIAGARA SOUND 47 B Preece 6-10-4 Gary Lyons
13 P404 PRINCIPAL BOY 19 T Etherington 4-10-1 R Rourke
14 U050 OUT OF THE BLUE 32 (B) M Eckley 5-10-0 J Mogford (7)

7-2 Caracol, 5-1 Newhall Prince, Innocent George, Shift Again, 8-1 Never So Blue, Hamadryad, 10-1 Evezio Rufo, 12-1 others.

RACING: FAVOURITE VULNERABLE IN GREENHAM STAKES AT NEWBURY

Muchea can topple Revoque

By Richard Evans
Racing Correspondent

REVOQUE is the logical choice to win the Tripleprint Greenham Stakes at Newbury today but, as Sleepytime proved yesterday, the winter months can make nonsense of the loftiest reputations.

Unbeaten in four starts last term, including two group one races, the Robert Sangster-owned colt deservedly emerged as the top juvenile in the International Classifications and has attracted considerable ante-post support for this year's 2,000 Guineas.

However, there are reasons for being cautious about backing Revoque on his reappearance today. On the Manton gallops, he is renowned for not over-exerting himself and Peter Chapple-Hyam has warned that he is only "as fit as we can get him".

In a couple of his races last year, notably the Prix de la Salamandre, Revoque found himself outpaced early on and the step back from a mile to seven furlongs today is far from certain to suit, especially as he meets rivals here with plenty of speed. It is also worth recalling that Rodrigo De Triano finished fourth in this race five years ago, before winning the 2,000 Guineas for the same owner and trainer.

While doubts surround the favourite, some of his rivals carry considerable confidence. After Dance Parade floored Sleepytime yesterday, Paul Cole, trainer of the winner, exuded confidence about The West. "It's a different season as a three-year-old and he will run really well."

In Command, the winner of the Dewhurst Stakes, and Yalaietanee, the highly regarded winner of a Newmarket maiden, run in the colours of Maktoum al-Maktoum. Although In Command possesses the better form, he too may appreciate further. By contrast, Yalaietanee boasts plenty of speed and is expected to improve considerably this season. "He's done very well over the winter and worked with Desert Story [the Craven Stakes winner] ten days ago. Michael Stoute is thrilled with him," Joe Mercer, the owner's racing manager, said.

Then there is Muchea, runner-up in the Middle Park Stakes and the apple of Mick Channon's eye. The step up to six furlongs at Newmarket helped the colt to show his best form and further improvement can be expected over today's trip. **Muchea** has delighted Channon in recent weeks and he is a hopeful choice in a race best watched for betting purposes.

However, the Stakis Casinos Scottish Grand National at Ayr holds considerable betting appeal. This stamina test is usually won by a lightly weighted runner and my two against the field are **Stormtracker** and **Samlee**.

Stormtracker was second to Hanakham, the subsequent Royal SunAlliance Chase winner, at Wincanton last autumn. Colin Weedon gave his horse a break during the winter as he dislikes soft ground and prepared him for the Cheltenham Festival, where he finished an excellent second to Flyer's Nap. Today's going will be ideal and the sound jumping eight-year-old can improve further.

Away from the gaze of the television cameras, **Royal Amaretto** appeals in the Arlington International Stakes (Newbury 5.00). Brian Meehan's runner was sandwiched between Desert Story and Hidden Meadow on his final start here last term and that form received a double boost at Newmarket this week.

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: ROYAL AMARETTO
(5.00 Newbury)
Next best: Stormtracker
(4.05 Ayr)

MARTIN LYNCH

Revoque, the top two-year-old colt in Europe last year, returns at Newbury today

NEWBURY

THUNDERER

2.00 Hardy Dancer
2.30 Election Day
3.00 IN COMMAND (nap)
3.30 Hawksley Hill
4.00 Chrysalis
4.30 Memorise
5.00 King Sound
5.30 Royale Finale

Our Newmarket Correspondent: 3.00 YALAIETANEE (nap). 4.30 Greek Palace. 5.30 Mamalik.

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM DRAW: 5F-1M STR, HIGH NUMBERS BEST SIS
TOTE JACKPOT MEETING

2.00 GRUNDON RECYCLE HANDICAP

BBC1

(£6,353: 1m 2f 6yd) (22 runners)

101	(11)	11015/0	ROCKFORCE 28 (F) (G Mazel) M Channon 5-10-0	R Hughes	–
102	(20)	3425/0	ROYAL SEATON 19 (CD,G) (Axminster Carpets Ltd) Mrs P Dutfield 8-9-13	D Holland	88
103	(15)	3280-22	VOLA VIA 7 (F) (G Smart) I Balding 4-9-11	L Dettori	●
104	(17)	11223/0-	SHAFT OF LIGHT 184 (D,F,G) (The Queen) Lord Huntingdon 5-9-11	D Harrison	–
105	(12)	14162-0	DOCKLANDS LIMO 19 (D,G) (Mrs L Olley) B McMath 4-9-11	T Quinn	90
106	(18)	113500-	DIMINUTIVE 177 (D,F) (Gainsbury Ptnrs) J Hills 4-9-11	M Henry (3)	91
107	(4)	30503-0	SERENDIPITY 19 (D,F) (H R R Ptnrs) B Millman 4-9-11	W J O'Connor	95
108	(19)	431/	BAY OF ISLANDS 596 (D,F) (Bloomsbury Stud) D Morris 5-9-8	N Day	–
109	(1)	204010-	EDAN HEIGHTS 161 (CD,S) (T Mountain) S Dow 5-9-8	A Daly (5)	96
110	(3)	111215-	PISTOL 224 (F,G) (Mrs B Sumner) C Horgan 7-9-8	Paul Eddery	91
111	(10)	1-30100	PUNKAH 8 (D,F,G) (D J Rueben) G McCourt 4-9-7	R Studholme (7)	90
112	(22)	/6504/6	MYRTLE QUEST 21 (F) (Miss M Sheriffe) R Charlton 5-9-7	T Sprake	–
113	(14)	4522-	GRAND SPLENDOUR 191 (A Holder) Lady Herries 4-9-6	A Clark	90
114	(9)	00060-5	HARDY DANCER 19 (BF,F) (P Higson) G L Moore 5-9-5	S Whitworth	98
115	(2)	560300/	VIRTUAL REALITY 548 (D,F) (Ash Ptnrs) J Toller 6-9-3	S Sanders	–
116	(21)	615660-	SHINING EXAMPLE 177 (D,F) (D Abler) P Makin 5-9-1	J Fortune	94
117	(13)	6/420-	OPALETTE 196 (Angmering Park Stud) Lady Herries 4-9-1	D O'Shea	91
118	(6)	52312-1	ANAK-KU 15 (D,G,S) (A Shah) Miss G Kelleway 4-9-1	K Fallon	94
119	(8)	316110-	ASHBY HILL 149J (D,F,G,S) (Miss M Tufnell) R Rowe 6-9-0	R Cochrane	95
120	(7)	0253-03	PAY HOMAGE 7 (F,G) (Miss A Hill) I Balding 9-8-13	R Fowley (7)	98
121	(5)	044020-	FLETCHER 191 (F) (Lady Margadale) H Morrison 3-8-13	Dane O'Neill	94
122	(16)	100040-	GREEN BOPPER 19J (G) (J & J Cook) C Morlock 4-8-13	R Perham	94

BETTING: 5-1 Hardy Dancer, 8-1 Vola Via, 10-1 Pistol, Ashby Hill, 12-1 Anak-Ku, Grand Splendour, Rockforce, 14-1 Diminutive, Pay Homage, Shining Example. 16-1 others.

1996: AL'S ALIBI 3-8-10 Pat Eddery (12-1) W Muir 12 ran

FORM FOCUS

ROYAL SEATON best effort short-head 2nd of 15 to Whitechapel in handicap at Ascot (1m 4f, good to soft) Sep 94. VOLA VIA 1¾l 2nd of 12 to Angel Face in handicap at Warwick (1m 3f, good to firm) with PAY HOMAGE (4lb worse off) 3¾l 3rd. SERENDIPITY 2½l 3rd of 10 to Saltando in handicap at Newmarket (1m, good to firm) on penultimate start, with HARDY DANCER (13lb better off) about 10½l 6th. PISTOL best effort beat Newport Knight short-head in handicap at Bath (1m 3f 144yd, good). HARDY DANCER about 2¼l 5th of 20 to Romios in handicap at Kempton (1m 2f, good to firm) with ROYAL SEATON (2lb better off) 10l 9th, DOCKLANDS LIMO (2lb better off) 31l 17th and SERENDIPITY (2lb better off) 33l 19th.
Selection: PAY HOMAGE

2.30 LANES END JOHN PORTER STAKES

BBC1

(Group III: £20,940: 1m 4f 5yd) (13 runners)

201	(3)	311320-	SACRAMENT 182 (D,F,G) (Cheveley Park Stud) M Stoute 6-9-3	W R Swinburn	94
202	(7)	211621-	MONGOL WARRIOR 160 (D,S) (H De Kwiatkowski) Lord Huntingdon 4-9-2	D Harrison	93
203	(11)	212221-	SALMON LADDER 175 (CD,F,G,S) (M Arbib) P Cole 5-9-1	T Quinn	96
204	(2)	5/01423-	ELA-ARISTOKRATI 224 (F,G) (A Michael) M Tompkins 5-8-12	R Cochrane	94
205	(9)	0/12104-	ELECTION DAY 161 (C,G,S) (Lord Weinstock) M Stoute 5-8-12	K Fallon	94
206	(10)	61/0122-	KUTTA 161 (C,F,G,S) (H al-Maktoum) R Armstrong 5-8-12	R Hills	96
207	(12)	112233-	LORD JIM 167 (V,D,F,G,S) (Mrs S Thomas) Lord Huntingdon 5-8-12	Dane O'Neill	87
208	(5)	15-	AIR QUEST 347 (C,G) (K Abdulla) R Charlton 4-8-11	Pat Eddery	86
209	(8)	123330-	CHIEF CONTENDER 175 (D,F,G,S) (Mrs J Magnier) P Chapple-Hyam 4-8-11	J Reid	94
210	(1)	21/511-3	PROPER BLUE 19 (F,G) (M Legg) T Mills 4-8-11	S Sanders	91
211	(6)	464135-	SAMRAAN 202 (CD,F,G,S) (K al-Mudhaf) J Dunlop 4-8-11	L Dettori	●
212	(4)	141236-	BEAUCHAMP JADE 202 (D,F,G) (E Penser) H Candy 5-8-9	C Rutter	85
213	(13)	164524-	WHITEWATER AFFAIR 175 (F,G) (J Greetham) M Stoute 4-8-8	D Pesllier	98

BETTING: 7-2 Salmon Ladder, 4-1 Sacrament, Samraan, 7-1 Kutta, 8-1 Ela-Aristokrati, 10-1 Election Day, 12-1 Proper Blue, 14-1 Whitewater Affair, 16-1 Air Quest, Chief Contender, 20-1 others.

1996: SPOUT 4-8-8 T Sprake (8-1) R Charlton 9 ran

FORM FOCUS

SACRAMENT beat SALMON LADDER (3lb worse off) neck in group III September Stakes at Kempton (1m 3f, good) with ELA-ARISTOKRATI two necks third. SALMON LADDER beat Kutta (3lb better off) ¾l in group III St Simon Stakes over course and distance (soft) with WHITEWATER AFFAIR (3lb worse off) 6½l 4th and CHIEF CONTENDER (3lb worse off) 28l 9th. ELA-ARISTOKRATI 5l 2nd of 8 to Tamayaz in group III Rose of Lancaster at Haydock (1m 2f 110yd, good to firm) on penultimate start. ELECTION DAY 13¾l 4th of 9 to Medaille Militaire in listed race at Doncaster (1m 4f, soft). SAMRAAN about 4l 3rd of 11 to Shantou in group I St Leger at Doncaster (1m 6f, firm) on penultimate start. WHITEWATER AFFAIR 4l 2nd of 13 to Annaba in group II Prix De Royallieu at Longchamp (1m 4f, soft) on penultimate start.
Selection: ELA-ARISTOKRATI

3.00 TRIPLEPRINT GREENHAM STAKES

BBC1

(Group III: 3-Y-O colts and geldings: £19,500: 7f str) (6 runners)

301	(5)	1-14	HAYES WAY 28 (G) (A Ward) T Mills 9-0	S Sanders	79
302	(6)	13231-	IN COMMAND 183 (D,F,G) (Maktoum al-Maktoum) B Hills 9-0	M Hills	90
303	(1)	132112-	MUCHEA 198 (F,G,S) (Albion Investments) M Channon 9-0	R Hughes	90
304	(4)	1111-	REVOQUE 188 (D,F,G) (R Sangster) P Chapple-Hyam 9-0	J Reid	●
305	(2)	1320-	THE WEST 183 (F) (HRH Prince Fahd Salman) P Cole 9-0	T Quinn	84
306	(3)	41-	YALAIETANEE 239 (D,S) (Maktoum al-Maktoum) M Stoute 9-0	L Dettori	70

BETTING: 4-7 Revoque, 7-2 In Command, 6-1 Muchea, 10-1 The West, 12-1 Yalaietanee, 33-1 Hayes Way

1996: DANEHILL DANCER 9-0 Pat Eddery (Evens fav) N Callaghan 8 ran

FORM FOCUS

IN COMMAND beat Musical Pursuit head in group I Dewhurst Stakes at Newmarket (7f, good) with THE WEST 3l 7th. MUCHEA head 2nd to Bahamian Bounty in group I Middle Park Stakes at Newmarket (6f, good to firm) with IN COMMAND 1l 3rd. REVOQUE best effort beat Symonds Inn 2½l in conditions race at York (7f, good) Aug 96, with IN COMMAND 4¼l 3rd. THE WEST 1½l 3rd to Abou Zouz in group II Gimcrack Stakes at York (6f, good) Aug 96. YALAIETANEE beat Flirting Around 4l in maiden at Newmarket (7f, good to soft).
Selection: REVOQUE

3.30 LADBROKES SPRING CUP

BBC1

(Handicap: £18,075: 1m 7yd rnd) (20 runners)

401	(10)	326414-	CADEAUX TRYST 191 (D,F,G) (M al-Maktoum) E Dunlop 5-10-0	D O'Donohoe (3)	90
402	(11)	3/1446-6	LONELY LEADER 30 (F) (S Suhail) R Hannon 4-9-12	Dane O'Neill	89
403	(13)	014040-	MARALINGA 133 (F,G) (D & Mrs J Oliver) Lady Herries 5-9-12	D O'Shea	92
404	(9)	1/22150-	ALMOND ROCK 196 (CD,G,S) (CIT Racing Ltd) J Fanshawe 5-9-8	D Harrison	93
405	(2)	5210-	UNITUS 263 (F) (Sheikh Mohammed) M Stoute 4-9-7	J Reid	85
406	(14)	100-	LIONIZE 168 (F) (M Tabor) P Chapple-Hyam 4-9-6	Paul Eddery	98
407	(17)	62510-2	HAWKSLEY HILL 28 (D,BF,F,G) (P Morrison) Mrs J Ramsden 4-9-6	J Fortune	97
408	(6)	22124-0	GRAND MUSICA 28 (G) (Mach 3 Racing) I Balding 4-9-4	Martin Dwyer (3)	91
409	(15)	5416-41	KUALA LIPIS 28 (D,F,G) (HRH Sultan Ahmad Shah) P Cole 4-9-4	T Quinn	97
410	(5)	16/6040-	AL ABRAQ 260 (F) (Abbott Racing Partners) J Hills 4-9-4	M Hills	85
411	(12)	50000-3	BAND ON THE RUN 30 (D,F,G,S) (D Allen) B McMahon 10-9-2	S Sanders	97
412	(7)	11005-0	SKY DOME 28 (D,F,G) (Miss D Merson) M Tompkins 4-8-13	R Hills	95
413	(4)	02155-	GO BRITANNIA 252 (D,G) (S Frisby) D Loder 4-8-13	L Dettori	91
414	(20)	06401-5	KALA SUNRISE 38 (D,F,G) (A Needham) C Smith 4-8-12	W J O'Connor	96
415	(18)	208001-	SAIFAN 168 (B,D,F,G) (Mrs L Brook) D Morris 8-8-12	N Day	96
416	(19)	52/130-	MEDIEVAL LADY 189 (C,F) (Summertree Stud) I Balding 4-8-12	R Cochrane	90
417	(3)	24135-	FORZA FIGLIO 282 (D,G) (Grid Ptnrs) Miss G Kelleway 4-8-12	O Peslier	89
418	(16)	213-	YALTA 246 (D,F) (Lord Weinstock) R Charlton 4-8-12	Pat Eddery	90
419	(8)	033/00-0	HUNTERS OF BRORA 28 (D,F,S) (R Gibbons) J Bethell 7-8-11	D Holland	94
420	(1)	60-2612	SECRET ALY 19 (D,F,G) (B Vesk) C Britain 7-8-11	B Doyle	●

BETTING: 7-1 Hawksley Hill, 8-1 Go Britannia, Kuala Lipis, Sky Dome, 9-1 Unitus, 10-1 Yalta, 12-1 Al Abraq, Cadeaux Tryst, Kala Sunrise, 14-1 Lionize, Secret Aly, 16-1 Medieval Lady, 20-1 others.

1996: ROYAL PHILOSOPHER 4-8-13 M Hills (25-1) J Hills 20 ran

FORM FOCUS

ALMOND ROCK beat Bollin Frank neck in 7-runner handicap at Ripon (1m, good to soft) Aug 96. HAWKSLEY HILL beat High Premium 1½l in 27-runner handicap at Newmarket (1m, good) Oct 96, with SAIFAN (13lb better off) 6½l 9th and BAND ON THE RUN (12lb better off) 18l 21st. KUALA LIPIS beat HAWKSLEY HILL (1lb better off) short-head in 24-runner Lincoln Handicap at Doncaster (1m, good to firm) with KALA SUNRISE (6lb better off) about 4¼l 5th, SKY DOME (3lb better off) 4½l 7th, HUNTERS OF BRORA (8lb better off) 5½l 9th and GRAND MUSICA (7lb better off) 14l 15th. KALA SUNRISE beat Hal's Pal ¾l in handicap at York (1m, good) on penultimate start, with GRAND MUSICA (3lb better off) about 1½l 4th. HUNTERS OF BRORA 8½l 8th of 11 to Hagwah in listed handicap at Newcastle (1m 2f, good) on penultimate start. SECRET ALY neck 2nd of 20 to Romios in handicap at Kempton (1m 2f, good to firm).
Selection: HAWKSLEY HILL

4.00 NETHERAVON MEDIAN AUCTION MAIDEN STAKES

(2-Y-O fillies: £3,818: 5f 34yd) (12 runners)

501	(5)	2	ARIAN DA 16 (J Hamilton-Jones) B Palling 8-11	T Sprake	●
502	(11)		BURNING LOVE (Miss J Reed) J Moore 8-11	K Fallon	–
503	(10)		CHRYSALIS (C Wright) P Cole 8-11	T Quinn	–
504	(6)		DIXIE CROSSROADS (A Merritt) R Hannon 8-11	R Hughes	–
505	(1)		FACE-OFF (N Ahamad) R Hannon 8-11	Dane O'Neill	–
506	(8)		HAMERRA (M Meade) M Meade 8-11	D Sweeney (5)	–
507	(7)	5	MAGICAL DANCER 11 (The Piccolo Boys) Mrs P Dutfield 8-11	D Holland	–
508	(2)		PHONE ALEX (J R Leisure Ltd) R Hannon 8-11	Pat Eddery	–
509	(4)		PRINCESS LONDIS (C Richards) A Foster 8-11	R Perham	–
510	(12)		RING THE RAFTERS (The Queen) I Balding 8-11	L Dettori	–
511	(3)		SUN IN THE MORNING (D Powell) B Meehan 8-11	B Doyle	–
512	(9)	0	SUPREME ANGEL 19 (Least Moved Ptnrs) M Muggeridge 8-11	M Henry (3)	87

BETTING: 5-2 Ring The Rafters, 3-1 Chrysalis, Phone Alex, 8-1 Arian Da, 10-1 Dixie Crossroads, 12-1 Sun In The Morning, Face-Off, 14-1 others.

1996: CHERRY BLOSSOM 8-11 Pat Eddery (6-5 fav) R Hannon 7 ran

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS	Wins	Rnrs	%	JOCKEYS	Winners	Rides	%
J Gosden	29	118	24.6	J Reid	50	262	19.1
P Chapple-Hyam	36	149	24.2	L Dettori	36	188	19.1
Miss G Kelleway	5	22	22.7	W Ryan	15	94	16.0
R Charlton	18	103	17.5	W R Swinburn	18	124	14.5
Lady Herries	8	49	16.3	T Quinn	29	234	12.4
D Loder	4	26	15.4	Pat Eddery	30	249	12.0

GUIDE TO OUR RACECARD

103	(12)	0-0432	GOOD TIMES 74 (CD,BF,F,G,S) (Mrs D Robinson) B Hall 9-10-0	B West (4)	88

Racecard number. Draw in brackets. Six-figure form (F — fell. P — pulled up. U — unseated rider. B — brought down. S — slipped up. R — refused. D — disqualified). Horse's name. Days since last outing; J if jumps, F if flat. (B — blinkers. V — visor. H — hood. E — Eyeshield. C — course winner. D — distance winner. CD — course and distance winner. BF — beaten favourite in latest race). Going on which horse has won (F — firm, good to firm, hard. G — good. S — soft, good to soft, heavy). Owner in brackets. Trainer. Age and weight. Rider plus any allowance. The Times Private Handicapper's rating.

4.30 BOB RILEY 50TH BIRTHDAY MAIDEN STAKES

(Div I: 3-Y-O: £3,428: 1m str) (17 runners)

601	(5)	2-	ALEZAL 178 (H Spooner) W Jarvis 9-0	O Peslier	●
602	(17)	40-	BEGORRAT 199 (R Bernard) B Meehan 9-0	B Doyle	93
603	(6)		BLEWBURY HILL (A Pye-Jeary) R Johnson Houghton 9-0	S Sanders	–
604	(8)		CHIEF MONARCH (Miss N Jefford) B Smart 9-0	R Cochrane	–
605	(9)	3	FOREIGN RULE 19 (R Sangster) P Chapple-Hyam 9-0	J Reid	94
606	(3)		GREEK PALACE (Lord Weinstock) M Stoute 9-0	W R Swinburn	–
607	(1)		LEGENDARY LOVER (M Myers) R Charlton 9-0	R Hughes	–
608	(15)	6-	MEMORISE 173 (K Abdulla) H Cecil 9-0	K Fallon	–
609	(4)		MISTRAL LORD (H George Racing) M Madgwick 9-0	D Harrison	–
610	(13)		MOONSHIFT (S Suhail) M Stoute 9-0	K Bradshaw	–
611	(7)		MOWELGA (Hesmonds Stud) Lady Herries 9-0	Paul Eddery	–
612	(2)	64-	PRAEDITUS 177 (B Kilpatrick) R Hannon 9-0	Dane O'Neill	86
613	(16)	0	PREMIER ECLIPSE 10 (Twelve Gems) P Harris 9-0	Pat Eddery	–
614	(10)		RASHIK (H al-Maktoum) W Hern 9-0	R Hills	–
615	(11)		RIVER PILOT (Lady Rothschild) R Charlton 9-0	T Sprake	–
616	(12)		SMART KID (HRH Sultan Ahmad Shah) P Cole 9-0	T Quinn	–
617	(14)		WALKABOUT (K Abdulla) B Hills 9-0	M Hills	–

BETTING: 9-2 Alezal, 6-1 Memorise, Walkabout, 7-1 Moonshift, Greek Palace, 8-1 Foreign Rule, 10-1 others.

1996: NASH HOUSE 9-0 J Reid (4-9 fav) P Chapple-Hyam 14 ran

5.00 ARLINGTON INTERNATIONAL RACECOURSE CONDITIONS STAKES

(3-Y-O: £7,962: 1m 2f 6yd) (10 runners)

1	(8)	413-	KING SOUND 188 (C,F) (Sheikh Mohammed) J Gosden 9-1	L Dettori	98
2	(7)	213-	FALAK 197 (G) (H al-Maktoum) W Hern 8-13	R Hills	92
3	(10)	1-2	MERSEY BEAT 49 (D,G) (K Higson) G L Moore 8-11	K Fallon	90
4	(1)	3-1	MINERSVILLE 19 (F) (Sheikh Mohammed) J Gosden 8-11	A Clark	82
5	(9)	555600-	OUT OF SIGHT 161 (D Allen) B McMahon 8-11	S Sanders	76
6	(4)	3412-	ROYAL AMARETTO 177 (F) (The Harlequin Ptnrs) B Meehan 8-11	O Peslier	●
7	(5)	1	SINGLE EMPIRE 19 (F) (A Collins) P Chapple-Hyam 8-11	J Reid	84
8	(6)	1-	SOPHOMORE 176 (G) (K Abdulla) B Hills 8-11	Pat Eddery	87
9	(2)	21-	APACHE STAR 173 (S) (A Oppenheimer) G Wragg 8-6	M Hills	81
10	(3)	21350-3	RAINDANCING 21 (F) (N Hayes) R Hannon 8-6	Dane O'Neill	93

BETTING: 2-1 Royal Amaretto, 5-2 King Sound, 6-1 Minersville, Single Empire, 8-1 Raindancing, Falak, 10-1 others.

1996: HIGH BAROQUE 8-13 J Reid (9-1) P Chapple-Hyam 5 ran

5.30 BOB RILEY 50TH BIRTHDAY MAIDEN STAKES

(Div II: 3-Y-O: £3,428: 1m str) (16 runners)

1	(6)	5-3	ABAJANY 23 (J White and Ptnrs) M Channon 9-0	P P Murphy (5)	84
2	(9)	60-	BOLD SAINT 224 (Shining Force) P Harris 9-0	W R Swinburn	72
3	(14)		BORDER FALCON (Sir William Purves) I Balding 9-0	L Dettori	–
4	(11)		DALLIANCE (Sheikh Mohammed) M Stoute 9-0	A Clark	–
5	(8)	0	GOLDEN SADDLE 336 (T Liang) P Cole 9-0	T Quinn	–
6	(4)		HEVER GOLF GLORY (Hever Racing Club) T Naughton 9-0	S Sanders	–
7	(7)		ISLAND SANCTUARY (Dr C Stelling) P Makin 9-0	J Fortune	–
8	(1)	0-	KHAFAAQ 177 (H al-Maktoum) W Hern 9-0	Paul Eddery	–
9	(10)		MAMALIK (H al-Maktoum) J Gosden 9-0	R Hills	–
10	(13)	6-	MYSTIC RIDGE 325 (Mrs A Coughlan) D Elsworth 9-0	R Cochrane	–
11	(12)		POLISHED STEEL (Maktoum al-Maktoum) Lady Herries 9-0	D O'Shea	–
12	(2)	5-	RAINWATCH 211 (Hesmonds Stud) J Dunlop 9-0	Pat Eddery	●
13	(5)	3-	ROYALE FINALE 173 (W Said) H Cecil 9-0	K Fallon	82
14	(16)		TEME VALLEY (K Abdulla) R Charlton 9-0	T Sprake	–
15	(15)		GOOD REPUTATION (R Sangster) B Hills 8-9	D Holland	–
16	(3)	0-	INTERREGNUM 274 (Regent Al Leisure Ptnrs) A Foster 8-9	R Perham	–

BETTING: 7-4 Mamalik, 5-1 Rainwatch, Good Reputation, 6-1 Dalliance, Royale Finale, 8-1 Teme Valley, 10-1 others.

1996: GOLDEN ACE 9-0 Dane O'Neill (33-1) P Chapple-Hyam 14 ran

RACING NEXT WEEK

MONDAY: Brighton (first race, 2.00), Nottingham (2.10), Towcester (2.20).

TUESDAY: Folkestone (2.00), Pontefract (2.15), Chepstow (2.40)

WEDNESDAY: Catterick Bridge (2.00), Epsom (C4, 2.05), Perth (2.20)

THURSDAY: Beverley (2.10), Fontwell Park (2.20), Perth (2.00)

FRIDAY: Carlisle (2.20), Sandown Park (C4, 2.05), Ascot (BBC, 5.30), Ludlow (5.45), Perth (2.10), Taunton (5.35)

SATURDAY: Leicester (2.00), Ripon (2.05), *Sandown Park* (C4, 2.15, mixed), Wolverhampton (AW, 7.00), Market Rasen (2.10), Worcester (5.45)

Flat meetings in bold

Al Abraq to give Hills repeat win

NEWBURY
BBC1

2.00: Frankie Dettori takes over on the consistent Vola Via, who has a sound form chance but rarely wins. Ashby Hill, a winner first time out 12 months ago, ended last season with five victories and reappears over her best trip. However, in a race best watched, **Hardy Dancer** has as good a chance as any. Well handicapped, judged on his form 12 months ago, he made a pleasing debut in the Rosebery Handicap at Kempton.

2.30: Samraan, third in the St Leger last year, has wintered well but may be more effective when seen over further. Michael Stoute runs three, of whom Sacrament makes most appeal despite having to carry a group two penalty. Air Quest looks sure to win some decent races this term, but **Salmon Ladder** will prove a tough nut to crack. He was out of the first two only once last year and ended up beating Kutta here in the St Simon Stakes.

3.00: see above.

3.30: A low draw is normally an advantage in this race, which counts against fancied runners such as Kuala Lipis and Hawksley Hill, who fought out the Lincoln finish. John Hills won this race last year and he looks to have a sound chance of a repeat with **Al Abraq**, ideally drawn in stall five. A useful two-year-old, he ran well in two hot handicaps last year and was gelded over the winter. Go Britannia has also been gelded since last year and has the ability to go close. Sky Dome, held up in the Lincoln, is best when racing prominently and is fairly weighted.

Richard Evans

AYR
CHANNEL 4

2.55: It will be disappointing if **Sparky Gayle** cannot defy his hefty penalty. A sound jumper, he was impressive when winning at Cheltenham, displaying a high cruising speed that will help him against these sharper sorts. The main threat could be Chief Minister, beaten by the selection earlier in the season and 3lb worse off today.

TODAY'S RACES ON TELEVISION

3.25: I'm Supposin now pays the price for his excellent fourth in the Champion Hurdle. He concedes weight all round here, including a substantial 16lb to the Supreme Novice Hurdle winner, Shadow Leader. The latter looked brimful with promise when routing the opposition but that Cheltenham contest looked substandard. Nevertheless, he will love the course and should figure prominently.

Dreams End is another with claims after his fine effort in group company at Newmarket three days ago, but this tight track could bring out the best in **Master Beveled**. He can be forgiven a disappointing run at Kempton in January, as he led the chase behind Make A Stand, and will be fit from a recent Flat outing.

4.05: see above.

4.40: **Mister Oddy** will find this far less competitive than the cut-throat affairs he contested at Cheltenham and Aintree. He likes to dominate and has better prospects of assuming his favoured role in this smaller field. He may have most to fear from Political Tower, a veteran around this course. Storm Falcon would go close if recapturing last season's best form.

Julian Muscat

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THUNDERER

1.55 Rossel
2.25 Celestial Choir
2.55 Sparky Gayle
3.25 I'm Supposin
4.05 Court Melody
4.40 No Pain No Gain
5.10 Samuel Wilderspin
5.40 The Village Way

The Times Private Handicapper's top rating: 4.05 KAMIKAZE.

GOING: GOOD SIS

1.55 ALBERT BARTLETT AND SONS JUVENILE NOVICES HANDICAP HURDLE

(4-Y-O: £4,403: 2m) (7 runners)

1	132110	ROSSEL 9F (CD,BF,F,G) (A Melville) P Monteith 12-0	R Dunwoody	94
2	1041	SHU GAA 42 (B,D,S) (Ali K Al Jafleh) O Sherwood 11-5	J Osborne	88
3	015	MUHTADI 28 (D,G) (The CIGS Partnership) Lady Herries 11-0	R Johnson	97
4	04525	MELTEMISON 10F (Lucky Seven Racing Club) M Hammond 10-11	R Garritty	92
5	213	CLASH OF SWORDS 29 (D,S) (Mrs J MacPherson) P Calver 10-8	L Wyer	●
6	000411	SOUSSE 19 (D,G) (Wentdale Racing Partnership) Mrs M Reveley 10-1	G Lee	94
7	0052	ALPINE JOKER 38 (BF) (The Cobra Partnership) P Hobbs 10-0	G Tormey	94

Long handicap: Alpine Joker 9-12.

BETTING: 9-4 Shu Gaa, 7-2 Rossel, 5-1 Muhtadi, 6-1 Sousse, 7-1 Clash Of Swords, 8-1 Meltemison, 12-1 Alpine Joker.

1996: TOUGH TEST 6-8-10 G Cahill (12-1) Mrs J Goodfellow 9 ran

2.25 HAMLET EXTRA MILD CIGARS GOLD CARD HANDICAP HURDLE

(£8,870: 2m 6f) (11 runners)

1	11-F4P4	CASTLEKELLYLEADER 58 (G,S) (P Barber/M Coburn/T Geary) P Nicholls 8-11-10	P Hide	95
2	11-1114	TULLYMURRY TOFF 38 (D,BF,F,G) (J Wilson/J Riley) J Jefferson 6-11-5	E Callaghan (3)	95
3	121363	FREDDIE MUCK 16 (F,G) (Cheltenham Racing) N Twiston-Davies 7-10-13	C Llewellyn	96
4	112-100	EXECUTIVE DESIGN 38 (C,G,S) (L Foster) Mrs M Reveley 5-10-11	P Niven	94
5	P01112	SHERIFFMUIR 15 (S) (J Wadham) Mrs L Wadham 8-10-9	J F Titley	98
6	133-110	SUPREME LADY 38 (D,G,S) (Supreme Lady Ptnrs) Miss H Knight 6-10-8	J Culloty	93
7	1-44344	OUTSET 15 (CD,G,S) (M Kilner) M Hammond 7-10-8	Mr C Bonner (3)	97
8	3-F3141	CELESTIAL CHOIR 18 (C,F,G) (Mrs C Sykes) J Eyre 7-10-7	B Storey	●
9	560565	DR LEUNT 15 (G) (P Emery) P Hobbs 6-10-6	G Tormey	97
10	214/32P	HOUSE CAPTAIN 16 (G,S) (Mrs G Middlebrook) J Fitzgerald 8-10-4	P Carberry	94
11	641264	SOLBA 19 (B,F,G,S) (Mrs R Anderson Green) C Parker 8-10-0	D Parker	–

Long handicap: Solba 9-12.

BETTING: 7-2 Tullymurry Toff, 5-1 Celestial Choir, 6-1 Sheriffmuir, Freddie Muck, 7-1 Executive Design, Outset, 10-1 others.

1996: PENNY A DAY 6-11-4 P Niven (2-1 fav) Mrs M Reveley 9 ran

2.55 EDINBURGH WOOLLEN MILL'S FUTURE CHAMPION NOVICES CHASE

C4

(Grade II: £14,490: 2m 4f) (9 runners)

1	4-11111	SPARKY GAYLE 37 (CD,F,G,S) (Mrs R Anderson Green) C Parker 7-11-10	B Storey	●
2	1271P6	STATELY HOME 37 (D,F,G) (P Bowen) P Bowen 6-11-10	R Johnson	83
3	060-221	CHIEF MINISTER 63 (F,G,S) (G Shiel) M Hammond 8-11-3	R Garritty	64
4	P1P12P	CROWN EQUERRY 15 (D,F,G,S) (R Ogden) G Richards 7-11-3	P Carberry	72
5	U5F112	MACGEORGE 53 (D,BF,F,G,S) (J Watson) R Lee 7-11-3	R Dunwoody	89
6	P0	SOUND STATEMENT 2 (F,S) (M Pinto) Miss S Edwards 8-11-3	Mr T Hills	–
7	21F050	THE REVEREND BERT 2 (G) (The Bolbe Club) G Balding 9-11-3	B Fenton	85
8	2525-F1	WITH IMPUNITY 42 (G,S) (Guest Leasing & Bloodstock) P Nicholls 8-11-3	A P McCoy	75
9	6-1225F	GUINDA 39 (F,S) (Mrs J Powell) N Twiston-Davies 7-10-12	C Llewellyn	83

BETTING: 6-4 Sparky Gayle, 5-1 Stately Home, 6-1 Chief Minister, Macgeorge, 8-1 Crown Equerry, 10-1 Guinda, 12-1 others.

1996: ADDINGTON BOY 8-11-10 A Dobbin (5-2) G Richards 5 ran

FORM FOCUS

SPARKY GAYLE beat Major Bell 4l in 10-runner chase at Cheltenham (2m 5f, good) with STATELY HOME 30l 6th and THE REVEREND BERT (4lb better off) 42l 8th. STATELY HOME best effort beat Land Afar 1¼l in 6-runner grade I Scilly Isles Novices' Chase at Sandown (2m 4f, good to firm) Feb 97. CHIEF MINISTER beat Bold Boss 16l in 5-runner Newcastle novice chase (2m 110yd, good). CROWN EQUERRY best effort beat Santa Concerto 2l in 8-runner novice chase at Carlisle (3m, good to soft) Feb 97. MACGEORGE best effort beat Random Harvest 2l in 7-runner novice handicap chase at Wetherby (2m 4f 110yd, good). THE REVEREND BERT 30l 6th of 13 to Gaelic Blue in novice handicap chase here (2m 5f, good).
Selection: SPARKY GAYLE

3.25 SAMSUNG ELECTRONICS SCOTTISH CHAMPION HURDLE

C4

(Limited handicap: £16,416: 2m) (11 runners)

1	114	I'M SUPPOSIN 39 (D,G) (N Cooper) R Rowe 5-11-7	R Dunwoody	98
2	006103	DREAMS END 3F (D,F,G,S) (T Price) P Bowen 9-10-11	A P McCoy	94
3	206-220	MASTER BEVELED BF (CD,G,S) (Mrs E Williams) P Evans 7-10-8	Mr R Thornton (7)	97
4	6624-P4	CLIFTON BEAT 14 (D,G,S) (D O'Connor) P Hobbs 6-10-8	C F Swan	94
5	100505	ZABADI 14 (D,G,S) (Lady Harris) D Nicholson 5-10-6	R Johnson	97
6	111	SHADOW LEADER 39 (D,G,S) (J Blackshaw) C Egerton 6-10-5	J Osborne	●
7	F1F-F16	EDELWEIS DU MOULIN 70 (D,BF,G,S) (R Ogden) G Richards 5-10-4	P Carberry	95
8	010616	KADASTROF 18 (D,G,S) (A Paton) R Dickin 7-10-4	X Aizpuru (5)	92
9	1-3F450	HOME COUNTIES 63 (CD,F,G,S) (Ray Cinemas Ltd) D Moffatt 8-10-4	D J Moffatt	92
10	6-30013	EXPRESS GIFT 17F (D,G,S) Mrs M Reveley 8-10-4	N Williamson	93
11	P-41112	INGLETONIAN 29 (C,D,BF,G,S) (Mrs H MacTaggart) B Mactaggart 8-10-4	B Storey	81

Long handicap: Home Counties 10-3, Express Gift 10-2, Ingletonian 9-6.

BETTING: 9-4 Shadow Leader, 11-4 I'm Supposin, 5-1 Master Beveled, 6-1 Edelweis Du Moulin, 7-1 Zabadi, 10-1 Clifton Beat, Dreams End, 12-1 Express Gift, 16-1 others.

1996: ALDERBROOK 7-11-7 R Dunwoody (8-11 fav) K Bailey 9 ran

FORM FOCUS

I'M SUPPOSIN 7¾l 4th of 17 to Make A Stand in Champion Hurdle at Cheltenham (2m 110yd, good) with ZABADI (15lb better off) 24l 11th and DREAMS END (10lb better off) 44l 14th. DREAMS END best effort beat Romancer 8l in 8-runner grade II Kingwell Hurdle at Wincanton (2m, good) with ZABADI (5lb better off) about 15¼l 5th, Feb 97. CLIFTON BEAT about 8l 4th of 7 to Absalom's Lady in hurdle at Chepstow (2m 110yd, good to firm) Apr 96. SHADOW LEADER beat Princeful 10l in 16-runner Supreme Novices' Hurdle at Cheltenham (2m 110yd, good). KADASTROF best effort beat Ashwell Boy ¾l in 7-runner handicap hurdle at Newbury (2m 110yd, good) penultimate start. EXPRESS GIFT 3l 3rd of 18 to Carlito Brigante in handicap hurdle at Sandown (2m 110yd, good) with KADASTROF (3lb worse off) 8¼l 6th.
Selection: SHADOW LEADER (nap)

4.05 STAKIS CASINOS SCOTTISH GRAND NATIONAL

C4

(Handicap chase: grade III: £41,316: 4m 1f) (18 runners)

1	1F5/1P2	BELMONT KING 42 (S) (Mrs B Boot) P Nicholls 9-11-10	A P McCoy	85
2	2/10-P04	BUCKBOARD BOUNCE 12 (F,G,S) (R Ogden) G Richards 11-11-7	Capt A Ogden	88
3	FF22PF	BUCKHOUSE BOY 15 (B,G,S) (The Bawtry Boys) N Twiston-Davies 7-11-0	C Maude	90
4	P2-1122	CAB ON TARGET 15 (C,BF,F,G,S) (M Hurst) Mrs M Reveley 11-10-12	P Niven	87
5	P53440	KILLESHIN 12 (V,D,G,S) (H Manners) H Manners 11-10-9	S Curran	86
6	3-6123R	SISTER STEPHANIE 19 (G,S) (Alnwick Partnership) G McCourt 8-10-6	R Dunwoody	94
7	241225	FIVELEIGH BUILDS 15 (C,F,G,S) (Miss L Russell) Miss L Russell 10-10-5	A Thornton	93
8	2-11212	STORMTRACKER 39 (F) (T Davis) C Weedon 8-10-3	M Richards	98
9	040-14F	KAMIKAZE 35 (B,G) (Major B Gatensbury) K Bailey 7-10-2	C O'Dwyer	●
10	1F-1130	BARONET 38 (F,G,S) (Mrs D Thompson) D Nicholson 7-10-2	R Johnson	85
11	111041	ACT THE WAG 7 (B,F,G) (R Ogden) M Todhunter 8-10-1	P Carberry	90
12	P-2413U	COURT MELODY 46 (B,BF,G,S) P Nicholls 9-10-1	Mr R Thornton (3)	82
13	U0/2400	DAKYNS BOY 12 (G,S) (A Parker) N Twiston-Davies 12-10-0	C Llewellyn	95
14	3U1241	SAMLEE 42 (F,G,S) (White Lion Partnership) P Hobbs 8-10-0	N Williamson	90
15	33833U	SPUFFINGTON 12 (G,S) (J Clopet) J Gifford 9-10-0	P Hide	83
16	1/U212	PARSONS BRIG 13P (F,G) (J Haldane) J Haldane 11-10-0	A S Smith	–
17	031212	OFF THE BRU 37 (C,BF,F,G,S) Mrs S Bradburne 12-10-0	Mr M Bradburne (7)	70
18	P0-0122	HIGHLANDMAN 15 (G) (Mrs H Fraser) J Haldane 11-10-0	Mr Chris Wilson	67

Long handicap: Spuffington 9-7, Parsons Brig 9-5, Off The Bru 8-2, Highlandman 8-0

BETTING: 6-1 Stormtracker, 7-1 Cab On Target, Act The Wag, 8-1 Sister Stephanie, 10-1 Buckboard Bounce, Killeshin, Parsons Brig, Kamikaze, 12-1 others

1996: MOORCROFT BOY 11-10-2 M Dwyer (20-1) D Nicholson 20 ran

FORM FOCUS

BELMONT KING 7l 2nd of 7 to Givenime at Chepstow (3m 2f 110yd, good to soft) with SPUFFINGTON (2lb worse off) 6l 3rd and BUCKBOARD BOUNCE tailed off and pulled up. BUCKBOARD BOUNCE 28¾l 4th of 36 to Lord Gyllene in Martell Grand National at Aintree (4m 4f, good) with KILLESHIN (11lb better off) 46l 7th, DAKYNS BOY (27lb better off) 55l 8th and SPUFFINGTON (20lb better off) unseated rider. FIVELEIGH BUILDS head 2nd of 5 to Call The Shots in handicap chase at Kelso (3m 4f, good) penultimate start, with COURT MELODY (1lb worse off) unseated rider. STORMTRACKER 1½l 2nd of 14 to Flyer's Nap in handicap chase at Cheltenham (3m 1f, good). ACT THE WAG beat Royal Saxon 1½l in 10-runner handicap chase at Sedgefield (3m 4f, good to firm). COURT MELODY best effort 9½l 3rd of 9 to Lord Gyllene in handicap chase at Uttoxeter (4m 2f, good) on penultimate start, with SAMLEE (4lb worse off) 25½l 4th.
Selection: COURT MELODY

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS	Wins	Rnrs	%	JOCKEYS	Winners	Rides	%
T Easterby	3	8	37.5	P Niven	35	154	22.7
N Twiston-Davies	4	12	33.3	R Garritty	7	32	21.9
J Gifford	5	16	31.3	P Carberry	5	30	16.7
G Richards	51	203	25.1	L Wyer	8	50	16.0
Mrs M Reveley	39	164	23.8	N Williamson	3	19	15.8
J Fitzgerald	4	18	22.2	B Storey	30	191	15.7
M Hammond	12	74	16.2	G Cahill	11	78	14.1

4.40 CLIENT ENTERTAINMENT SERVICES HANDICAP CHASE

C4

(£5,183: 2m) (9 runners)

1	35316F	POLITICAL TOWER 14 (CD,F,G,S) (G Nixon) R Nixon 10-11-10	B Storey	93
2	2113U4	MISTER ODDY 14 (D,G,S) (Mrs R Hill) J King 11-11-10	T J Murphy	98
3	111520	EDREDON BLEU 72 (G,S) (J Lewis) Miss H Knight 5-11-7	R Dunwoody	–
4	1311-00	STORM FALCON 37 (D,F,G) (E Dalby) S Mellor 7-10-12	Chris Webb (5)	90
5	F52345	NO PAIN NO GAIN 16 (B,CD,G,S) (Marvellous Partnership) J Gifford 9-10-12	P Hide	96
6	121112	WEAVER GEORGE 39 (D,BF,F,G,S) (Regent Decorators) W Storey 7-10-6	M Moloney	99
7	512113	MONYMAN 86 (D,BF,F,G) (T Hemmings) M Hammond 7-10-2	N Williamson	91
8	1F2423	GOLDEN HELLO 19 (D,F,G,S) (G Shouler) T Easterby 6-10-2	L Wyer	●
9	24-1311	RALLEGIO 37 (CD,G,S) (G Robertson) P Monteith 8-10-0	Mr R Thornton (3)	90

Long handicap: Rallegio 9-8

BETTING: 7-2 Monyman, 4-1 Mister Oddy, 5-1 Political Tower, 6-1 Weaver George, 7-1 No Pain No Gain, Golden Hello, 8-1 Rallegio, 10-1 others

1996: PORT IN A STORM 7-10-0 Mr C Bonner (4-1) M Hammond 5 ran

FORM FOCUS

POLITICAL TOWER best effort beat Regal Romper 6l in 3-runner handicap chase at Wetherby (2m, heavy) Feb 97. MISTER ODDY 12½l 3rd of 4 to Kings Cherry in handicap chase at Newbury (2m 1f, good to soft) Feb 97. NO PAIN NO GAIN 13¾l 5th of 20 to Bells Life in handicap chase at Aintree (2m 6f, good). WEAVER GEORGE 7l 2nd of 4 to Cross Canon in handicap chase at Sedgefield (2m 110yd, good to firm). GOLDEN HELLO 15l 3rd of 4 to Brighter Shade in novice chase at Wetherby (2m 4f 110yd, good). RALLEGIO beat Exemplar 1¾l in 8-runner novice chase at Hexham (2m 110yd, good).
Selection: MISTER ODDY

5.10 GLENMUIR FUTURE CHAMPION STANDARD OPEN NATIONAL HUNT FLAT RACE

(Div I: £1,711: 2m) (20 runners)

1	11-	SIREN SONG 623 (D,G) (M Wall) C Mann 6-12-0	R Dunwoody	–
2	1	RED CURATE 49 (D,S) (Mrs M Turner & C Whale) G McCourt 6-11-11	A P McCoy	–
3	10	SAMUEL WILDERSPIN 38 (D,G) (County Graphics) D Nicholson 5-11-11	R Massey (3)	–
4	1	SIMONS CASTLE 81 (D,G) (Mrs B Marchant) R O'Sullivan 4-11-5	R Johnson	–
5	01	SOCIETY TIMES 72 (D,F) (A McPherson) D Nolan 4-11-5	N Williamson	–
6		BINGLEY BANK (Mrs J Mould) N Twiston-Davies 5-11-4	C Llewellyn	–
7		BLAKE'S DEMIN (Ashleybank Investments Ltd) G Richards 5-11-4	R Burns (7)	–
8		LORD OF THE RIVER (B Stewart-Brown) O Sherwood 5-11-4	J Osborne	–
9		PERRYMAN (Mrs S Ellen) K Bailey 6-11-4	C O'Dwyer	–
10		RADICAL STORM (W Aitchison) J Charlton 6-11-4	K Johnson	–
11		REALLY USEFUL (R Ogden) Miss S Hall 5-11-4	P Carberry	–
12		RIVER MULLIGAN (St Mellion Estates Ltd) P Hobbs 5-11-4	C F Swan	–
13		THE OPERATOR (Greystoke Stables Ltd) G Richards 6-11-4	L O'Hara	–
14	0	HEIDIQUEENOFCLUBS 89 (D Langdon) N Twiston-Davies 6-10-13	C Maude	–
15		BALA PYJAMA (Aykroyd and Sons) R Fahey 4-10-12	L Wyer	–
16		BUABHALL MOR (P Fitzpatrick) M Todhunter 4-10-12	C McCormack (7)	–
17	0	DONNYBROOK 56 (R Smith (York)) R Woodhouse 4-10-12	B Grattan (5)	–
18		KINGS MEASURE (J H Wilson) J Jefferson 4-10-12	E Callaghan (3)	–
19		OH SO COSY (Mrs R Anderson Green) C Parker 4-10-12	B Storey	–
20		JOWOODY (Mrs D Thomson) Mrs D Thomson 4-10-7	D Parker	–

BETTING: 9-4 Samuel Wilderspin, 4-1 Siren Song, 5-1 Red Curate, 7-1 Simons Castle, 8-1 River Mulligan, 10-1 Lord Of The River, Perryman, 12-1 others.

1996: MARELLO 5-10-13 G Cahill (7-4 fav) Mrs M Reveley 20 ran

5.40 GLENMUIR FUTURE CHAMPION STANDARD OPEN NATIONAL HUNT FLAT RACE

(Div II: £1,711: 2m) (20 runners)

1	61	BENVENUTO 51 (D,G) (Mrs L Farmer) K Bailey 6-11-11	C O'Dwyer	–
2	1	GO NATIVE 33 (D,F) (T Hemmings) Mrs S Smith 5-11-11	R Wilkinson (5)	–
3	41	RASAK 65 (D,S) (M H Watt) Lady Herries 5-11-11	R Dunwoody	–
4	2	CARLINGFORD TYKE 49 (Jocmgo Racing) T Carr 5-11-4	G Cahill	–
5		CHOCOLATE DRUM (The Claret and Blue Partnership) J Baker 6-11-4	M Moloney	–
6		DECOUPAGE (J Dean) C Egerton 5-11-4	N Williamson	–
7		KINDALOO (Mrs R Anderson Green) C Parker 5-11-4	B Storey	–
8	2	NORMANIA 30 (M Pinto) Miss S Edwards 5-11-4	Mr T Hills	–
9		SKILLWISE (C Calvert) T Easterby 5-11-4	L Wyer	–
10		STEALS YER THUNDER (S Lucey) Mrs A Bowlby 5-11-4	A Thornton	–
11		THE VILLAGE WAY (St Mellion Estates Ltd) D Nicholson 6-11-4	R Johnson	–
12		TIED FOR TIME (Miss L Robertson) Miss H Knight 5-11-4	J Culloty	–
13		WILLIAM OF ORANGE (Special Reserve Racing) G Richards 5-11-4	L O'Hara	–
14	35	WOODFIELD VISION 43 (BF) (Fniddey Holdings Ltd) Mrs M Reveley 6-11-4	P Niven	–
15	0	GLEVUM 28 (Mrs J Powell) N Twiston-Davies 5-10-13	C Llewellyn	–
16		HACK ON (Mrs A Goodwin) P Hobbs 5-10-13	G Tormey	–
17		NEEDLE THREAD (Golf Foods Ltd) G Richards 5-10-13	R Burns (7)	–
18	0	OPEN FAIRWAY 26 (Whitworth Racing) M Dods 4-10-12	R McGrath (5)	–
19		VALHALLA (Great Head House Estates Ltd) M Todhunter 4-10-12	A P McCoy	–
20		GEM OF HOLLY (R Wood) R Wood 4-10-7	Mr R Thornton (3)	–

BETTING: 7-2 Benvenuto, 5-1 Go Native, 6-1 Rasak, 7-1 Normania, 8-1 The Village Way, 10-1 Tied For Time, 12-1 Woodfield Vision, 14-1 others.

1996: NO CORRESPONDING DIVISION

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13/2	Stormtracker	14/1	Court Melody
7/1	Cab On Target	16/1	Fiveleigh Builds
10/1	Baronet	20/1	Dakyns Boy
10/1	Buckboard Bounce	33/1	Spuffington
10/1	Kamikaze	100/1	Highlandman
12/1	Buckhouse Boy	100/1	Off The Bru
12/1	Killeshin	100/1	Parsons Brig

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GOLF

Eales drives ill-founded gibes from his mind

FROM MEL WEBB
IN CANNES

PAUL EALES, a proud man of Lancashire, is not the biggest hitter even in full health and at his best fighting weight. So, when a stomach bug that laid him low in February left him weak and half a stone lighter, he became an immediate candidate to have the golfing sand kicked in his face.

Eales, who was stricken during the South African Open in Johannesburg — "they never got to the bottom of it," he said, a remark that had Freudian slip written all over it — lost almost 30 yards in length off the tee, found that he needed two clubs more to achieve the same distance and became a butt for the cruel humour of his friends.

The frail husk that Eales became is now happily a thing of the past and, back in trim, he demonstrated that he is functioning well again by producing a round of 65 that left him in close pursuit of the leaders at the halfway point of the Cannes Open yesterday.

Eales, who trails Stuart Cage by two shots and Santiago Luna by one on 137, five under par, is still not knocking the cover off the ball — his Sunday-best drive would leave him the thick end of 100 yards behind young Mr Woods off the tee — but he is a player who constantly demonstrates that there is more than one way to skin a Tiger.

He had eight birdies and only two bogeys in his best score of the year, even including a spell in the two early-season tournaments in Australia that saw him playing the best golf of his life.

His best finish this year is a tie for eleventh place. He will have to do something truly dreadful if he is not to beat that handsomely come tomorrow.

Finally, a story of two great escape acts that perfectly sums up the imponderables that make golf the endlessly fascinating game that it is. Joakim Haeggman had an 83 in the first round and seemed to have little to play for in the second beyond the possible salvage of a little self-respect. Far from it. A former Ryder Cup man, he improved by an astonishing 20 strokes with a 63 that was a mere one stroke outside the course record.

Only a little less unlikely was the feat of David Gilford, who followed a 79 with a 67. Both finished on 146 to beat the cut by a shot. Easy — forget the clever stuff, relax, give it a rip and Robert is the much-respected brother of one of your parents.

SCORES

EARLY LEADERS AFTER TWO ROUNDS (Great Britain and Ireland unless stated): 136: S Luna (Sp) 70, 66 137: P Eales 72, 65 138: P Broadhurst 68, 70 139: T Bjorn (Den) 71, 68; S Scahill (NZ) 67, 72 140: S Bottomley 70, 70; P McGinley 72, 68; N Briggs 71, 69 141: F Valera (Sp) 72, 69; D Smyth 72, 69; A Coltart 71, 70; R Muntz (Hol) 68, 73; N Fasth (Swe) 73, 68 142: M Gronberg (Swe) 71, 71; C Whitelaw (SA) 71, 71; R McFarlane 70, 72; D Carter 68, 74 143: P Walton 70, 73; A Sherborne 69, 74; M Jonzon (Swe) 72, 71; D Cooper 73, 70; P Mitchell 73, 70 144: D Westermark (Swe) 71, 73; P Sjoland (Swe) 72, 72; B Lane 75, 69; P Curry 72, 72; M Lanner (Swe) 72, 72; D Howell 72, 72; P Fulke (Swe) 74, 70; R Rafferty 74, 70; R Russell 72, 72; M A Martin (Sp) 71, 73

Phil Yates previews the world snooker championship which starts today

Hendry's ascent to seventh heaven littered with pitfalls

STEPHEN HENDRY is synonymous with heroics at the Crucible Theatre, but he has never faced quite the challenge that lies ahead at the Embassy world championship that begins in Sheffield this morning.

In 1992 Hendry recovered from a 14-8 deficit to beat Jimmy White 18-14 and capture his second world title. Two years later he played 4½ matches while handicapped by a fractured bone in his left elbow, yet still won and, 12 months on, compiled an unprecedented 12 century breaks on the way to lifting the trophy again.

Yet Hendry will need to be at, or near, peak form if he is to break the modern-era record of six world championship titles that he holds jointly with Ray Reardon and Steve Davis. Quite simply, Hendry, the defending champion and world No 1, has the draw from hell.

Not surprisingly, the bookmakers have unanimously installed him as the favourite to collect the £210,000 first prize. Hendry, though, has been involved at the business end of one competition after another over the past six months and fell victim to fatigue when he lost 9-2 to Mark Williams in the final of the British Open, in Plymouth a fortnight ago.

Williams, whose long potting makes him a dangerous opponent for anyone, possesses the self-belief and ability to give Hendry a stern examination in the second round, should he overcome Terry Griffiths, the champion in 1979, in the first. That, of course, is assuming that Hendry beats Andy Hicks.

TELEVISION

TODAY: BBC1: 1.05pm, 3.40pm, 4pm. BBC2: 10.30am and 4.40pm.
TOMORROW: BBC2: 1.30pm and 9pm

Hicks, who eliminated Davis, Willie Thorne and Peter Ebdon en route to the last four in 1995, is also a former European Open, United Kingdom championship and Benson and Hedges Masters semi-finalist. He is, therefore, one of the most accomplished of the 16 qualifiers.

Hendry has shown a degree of vulnerability in the early stages of events — he trailed Jason Ferguson 6-3 in the first round last year before shakily coming through 10-8 — and Hicks and Williams will draw encouragement from this knowledge.

Ronnie O'Sullivan remains erratic, at times petulant and maddeningly inconsistent, but he can often be unstoppable. Should the seedings go to plan, O'Sullivan, the winner of the Asian Classic and German Open this season, will provide another daunting test for Hendry in the quarter-finals.

John Parrott, Nigel Bond and Jimmy White head the list of Hendry's potential opponents in the semi-finals, with Ebdon, John Higgins, Davis and Ken Doherty the potential finalists from the bottom half of the draw. While acknowledging that Hendry had not been dealt the best of hands, Ian Doyle, his manager, is confident of the trophy spending a seventh year in the cabinet that has pride of place in the Stirling snooker club that he owns.

"Something always seems to switch on in Stephen's head when the Crucible's coming up; I've seen it happen time and again," Doyle said, after watching Hendry make eight century breaks in 14 frames during a practice session. "No matter how much money he wins and what he achieves, Stephen never rests on his laurels.

"You can set your clock by him because he turns up at the club every morning around 9.30, brushes and irons his own table, then practises for at least five or six hours every day. That's why he's where he is."

Temperament has also played a significant role in Hendry's dominance at Sheffield. He responds positively to the unique atmosphere, to high quality rivals and the luxury of multisession matches after the staple diet of best-of-nine-frames sprints at most other events.

His dedication, nerve, experience, desire and past record suggest that he will triumph once more, but, because of the pressure placed upon him by the draw, a question mark hangs over him.

SIX TO FOLLOW

Mark Williams (Wales)
Age: 22. World ranking: 16. World championship best: last 64 (1996)
Williams, one of seven players making his debut at the Crucible this year, gained prominence by winning the Regal Welsh Open 16 months ago. This season the smooth-cueing left-hander has won the Grand Prix and British Open on the way to third place in the provisional world rankings

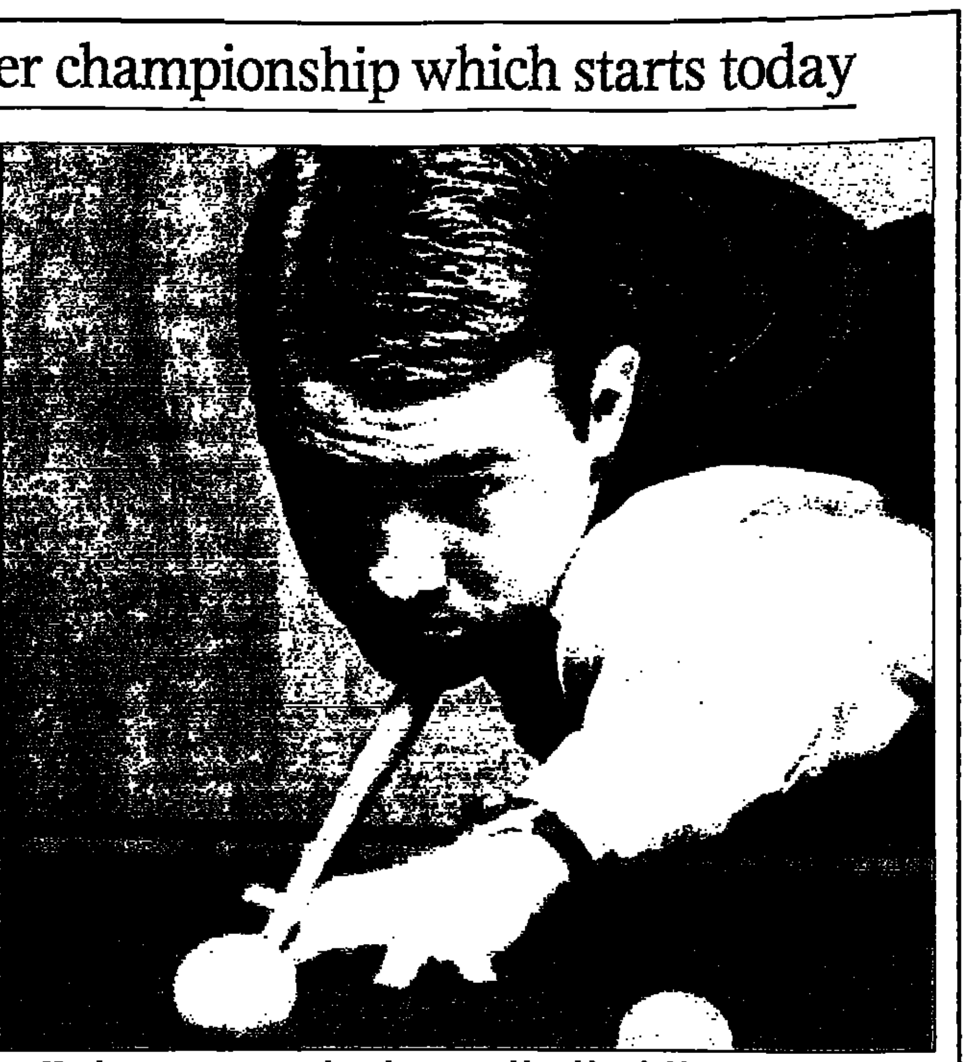
Peter Ebdon (England)
Age: 26 Ranking: 3 Best: runner-up (1996)
Determined and ambitious to the point of being obsessive, Ebdon has the credentials to go one better than 12 months ago, when he lost 18-12 to Stephen Hendry in the final. Winning the Thailand Open in Bangkok last month gave his confidence a timely boost

Ronnie O'Sullivan (Eng)
Age: 21 Ranking: 8. Best: Semi-finalist (1996).
In terms of natural ability, O'Sullivan has no equal, but that also goes for inconsistency. When performing at optimum efficiency, he has the knack of making the game appear effortless. He has won eight titles as a professional, including the United Kingdom championship, in 1993, and the Benson and Hedges Masters, in 1995.

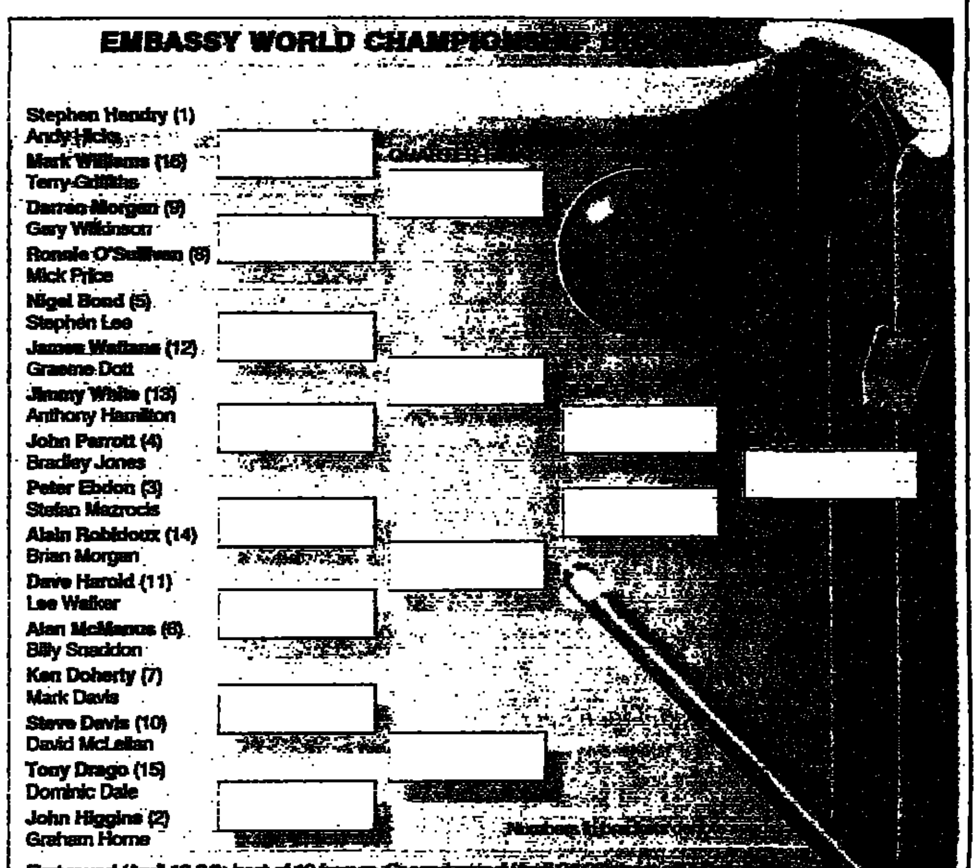
Ken Doherty (Ireland)
Age: 27. Ranking: 7 Best: quarter-finalist (1994).
Doherty could, given an improvement on recent form, emerge as a finalist from the bottom half of the draw. He is the former Regal Scottish Masters and Welsh Open champion and holder of the European League title. Victory for the 1989 world amateur champion would make him the first player to complete that double

James Wattana (Thailand)
Age: 27. Ranking: 12. Best: semi-finalist (1993).
Wattana, the highest-ranked player from overseas, would be only the second non-British winner in the 70 years of the tournament after Cliff Thorburn, of Canada, in 1980. He must overcome the disadvantage of using a new cue after irreparably damaging his own in February

Stephen Lee (England)
Age: 22. Ranking: 31 Best: last 32 (1995).
Lee might not possess the necessary experience at the top level to become the most surprising champion since Joe Johnson in 1986, but he could make an impact. He will be highly motivated to beat Nigel Bond in the first round, as victory will help him to claim a place among the elite top 16 players next season.



Hendry's temperament and steady nerve could see him win his seventh world title



First round (April 19-24): best of 19 frames. Second round [illegible]
Quarter-finals (April 29-30): best of 25 frames. Semi-finals [illegible]
Final (May 4-5): best of 35 frames.
Prize-money this year totals £1.26 million. Champion: £210,000. Runner-up: £126,000.
Losing semi-finalists: £63,000. Losing quarter-finalists: £31,500. Last 16: [illegible]
Last 32: £9,450. Highest break: £18,000. Maximum break: £147,000.

RUGBY UNION

Sale ready to delay the Wasps title party

BY DAVID HANDS
RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

IF WASPS do not win the last Courage Clubs Championship — before English rugby moves into premiership territory next season — then it will be nobody's fault but their own. With three games to play they stand five points clear of Leicester's faltering pursuit and six clear of resurgent Bath, who have four league games remaining.

Yet Wasps still have something of a minefield to negotiate. Tomorrow will be Wasps' last home game at Loftus Road, against Sale, who are one of the few clubs to have held form consistently well despite the fixture pile-up of recent weeks. Thereafter Wasps must travel to Northampton, where both Leicester and Bath have come unstuck this season, and to their inveterate rivals, Harlequins.

Wasps and Sale have in common the fact that few of their key players have succumbed to injury recently. The same 15 players who appear tomorrow have started the past three league games for Wasps, while Sale, who suffered their injuries early in the season, have also been able to select from strength, though John Fowler, the lock chosen to tour Argentina with England, underwent an arthroscopy to determine the extent of the damage to his knee sustained in the defeat of Saracens last Tuesday.

Some 7,000 are expected at Loftus Road — which is 6,000 more than attended the equivalent fixture at Sudbury last season — and, if Wasps win, they need only a draw from their two remaining fixtures to be sure of the title.

Sale, however, who lost the home fixture by two points on the opening day of the season, have enjoyed their visits to London this season, with a victory at Harlequins and a draw at Saracens. "We are not worried about Sunday, we have nothing to lose," Adrian Hadley, their team manager, said, though he knows as well as anyone the pressure that exists on the fourth qualifying place for Europe.

Victory for Bath over Orrell today is axiomatic, but, should Leicester lose their fourth match in a row, they will be out even of mathematical contention for the title. At least they have found their way back home to play Saracens, after a weary period on the road, and they have the likes of Johnson, Miller and Back returning to bolster their forward challenge. Nor do Saracens, now promoting Francois Pienaar to the role of player-coach, have much beyond pride to play for, although Michael Lynagh returns at stand-off half.

The juxtaposition of the announcement on Thursday of the Allied Dunbar Premiership for the top 24 clubs next season with the CIS county championship final at Twickenham today is a neat one, encapsulating the debate that has afflicted English rugby this season. The final remains a significant occasion for 95 per cent of the game, though that significance will not be reflected in the attendance. Some 10,000 are expected to watch Somerset meet Cumbria, some of whose supporters have been affected by the security alerts in the north of England yesterday.

There is a curious symmetry about the finalists. Somerset's only previous success in the competition, then in its heyday, was 1923. A year later Cumbria, then known under the different county boundaries as Cumberland and Westmorland, also won the final and they have not made so much as a semi-final since.

If they are to win, however, they will have to keep Nick Edmonds, the Somerset captain, in check. He is one of six players from the thriving Bridgwater and Albion club. It was late dropped goals by Edmonds that carried his side past Hampshire and then Northumberland, and the same XV appears at Twickenham with the West Country banner brandished so proudly in recent years by Cornwall.

Arwel Thomas, who has not played for the past two months because of damaged knee ligaments, may yet play in the Swalec Cup final against Cardiff next week if he comes through Swansea's Welsh League match today against Newbridge successfully. Thomas, the Wales stand-off half, was forced to withdraw from the international with England in Cardiff last month.

TABLE TENNIS

Cooke continues medal chase

BY RICHARD EATON

ALAN COOKE, whose two victories on Thursday did most to ensure that England's men would regain the team title, continued his winning ways in an attempt to complete a hat-trick of gold medals at the Commonwealth championships at the Kelvin Hall, Glasgow.

Cooke won twice in England's 4-1 triumph over India in the men's team final and followed up yesterday with three victories that carried him and Bradley Billington, his England team-mate, to the doubles semi-finals.

The pair, from Derbyshire, have been made top seeds, but Cooke has never won the doubles title and is cautious.

"There are several who can win it and so I was pleased with our effort today," he said after a 22-20, 21-13 quarter-final win over Tian Syh-Eng and Liu Jun-Hui, of Malaysia.

Tian and Liu recovered strongly from 13-17 in the first game and saved two game points to reach 20-20. It was then that two unreturnable strokes from Billington snatched a vital lead. Earlier the England pair had comfortably beaten Campbell and Alleyne, of Barbados, and Sahajasein and Bhurtun, of Mauritius.

Cooke, three times a silver medal-winner and once the singles champion, begins his singles campaign as No 2 seed with four matches today. On present form, he could take the title again.

Wales became certain of a Commonwealth medal for the first time when they acquired semi-finalists in both women's and men's doubles. Bethan Daunton and Natasha Williams upset Miao Miao and Shirley Zhou, the No 3 seeds, from Australia, while Ryan Jenkins and Stephen Ward overcame Geng Hai-Tao and Francis Trudel, the No 4 seeds, from Canada.

SPORT IN BRIEF

Shaw completes steady start

NORMA SHAW, the English champion, and Jayne Roylance, whom she beat in the national final last month, came through their opening matches in the round-robin session of the women's world indoor singles bowls championship at Llanelli with flying colours yesterday, but Linda Evans, of Wales, was surprisingly beaten by Li Suk Man, of Hong Kong.

Man performed superbly to win the first and third sets 7-4, allowing Evans, one of the pre-tournament favourites for the title, to take the middle set, 7-5.

Shaw defeated Robin Forrest, of Canada, in three sets and had an easy win over Evelyn McGarvie, from Perth. Roylance beat Alison Merrien, from Guernsey, and Linda Evans, of Swansea.

Tennis: Richard Krajicek, yielding only nine points on his own service, cruised past David Prinosil 6-4, 6-3 yesterday and into the semi-finals of the Japan Open in Tokyo. His opponent will be Lionel Roux, who beat Martin Damm 6-3, 6-1 in the quarter-finals.

Cycling: Yvonne McGregor, whose season's prime target is to regain the world one-hour record from Jeannie Longo, of France, makes her return to British time-trials today after finishing second in the three-day Tour of Vendée, in France. She competes in the Kingston Phoenix ten-mile event near Dorking, Surrey.

Cricket: Sri Lanka have included one newcomer in a 15-man squad for the first of two Tests against Pakistan starting in Colombo today. He is Russell Arnold, a left-handed batsmen who also bowls off spin and beat Aravinda de Silva's record aggregate for a Sri Lankan domestic season in 1995-96.

London Marathon: The concluding times for the race last weekend will be published on Monday.

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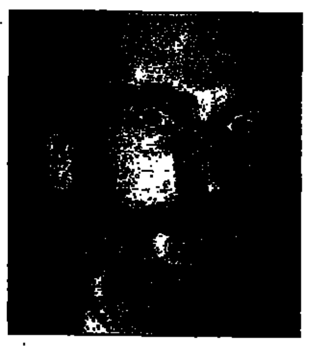
Let those in glass houses build the fence

SIMON BARNES



On Saturday

THIS really *is* the end of civilisation as we know it. At Melbourne Town Cricket Club, in Derbyshire, notices have been affixed to the wall of the dressing-rooms urging batsmen to refrain from hitting sixes between long off and deep extra cover.

Cricket has been played on the ground for 77 years, but South Derbyshire council gave developers permission to build six houses around the boundary and did not bother to stipulate that a protective fence should be erected.

Last season a big hit smashed a patio window, whatever that is, damaged a television set, no great loss, and broke some china. Well, there is a line about heat and kitchens that appears to cover the situation, but John Harrison, the club chairman, said: "We will be urging batsmen to use their best endeavours not to loft the ball in the direction of the houses."

The club offers to pay 25 per cent of the costs of a protective fence, up to a total of £2,000, which strikes me as generous. This column wishes them a joyful season, full of runs and sixes, and damned be he who first cries: "Hold, enough."

Standards issue

It is all too easy to malign referees — and so I will. Referees take a lot of abuse, and it is a very hard person indeed who does not believe that every word of it is justified. If anybody tries to give you an argument on this score, simply say: "What about Roger Nowell?" and your case is won.

Nowell, taking charge of a football match between Grassington Reserves and Hellfield Rangers in the Craven League, in Yorkshire, decided to do so in a replica of a World Cup referee's shirt in a fetching combination of yellow and black. The West Riding County Football Association (WRCFA), however, holds to the admirable principle that referees wear black.

They have withdrawn his registration, but Nowell has had the temerity to protest against the decision, insisting: "I haven't done anything wrong."

However, Roy Carter, the secretary of the WRCFA, said: "We believe referees under our jurisdiction should attain a certain standard and Mr Nowell wasn't. If it is an instruction, then it is what he should wear."

Vanity, thy name is Nowell. They should issue the same instruction at every level up to and including the World Cup final. The fewer gimmicks and bad colour schemes in sport, the better. Humph.

Tough decision

If you are the sort of footballer who tends to thump people, I suggest a move to Italy. A decision in a court in Aosta, Piedmont, has established that it is not a criminal offence to smash in someone's face on a football pitch.

The smasher and thumper is Adriana Perucca, the goalkeeper of Lega Dota Brunola. He had an outbreak of fisticuffs with Stefano Giopp, of Hone Arnad, in 1994 — this is the Italian judicial system we are discussing, remember — and broke two of Giopp's teeth in the course of it.

Not a good day for Giopp, all in all. His team lost 7-0 and he was sent off for protesting.

☐ You will recall this column's delight in the Detroit Red Wings ice hockey victories, in which supporters celebrated goals by throwing dead octopuses onto the ice. Well, another noble tradition meets its end: a home team will be given a two minute delay-of-game penalty if such a thing occurs again. This holds good for Florida Panthers, whose supporters celebrate goals with bombardments of plastic rats.

Daddy knows best

You've got to be tough in football, son. Which reminds me — you're fired. Yes, Tommy Wheeldon, the youth manager of Swindon Town, has just sacked his own son.

He told Thomas, 17, that he was not good enough for mighty Swindon. "It just goes to show that our standards here are very high," Wheeldon *père* said. "I saw him in the gym soon after I told him the news, and he was doing push-ups and working hard, which shows he has taken the right attitude to the decision."

Wheeldon *fils*, at a crossroads in his career, has possibilities with other clubs, and perhaps coaching work in the United States. Meanwhile, Wheeldon *père* is recommended to think about another son and father who had hard words at another crossroads, this one near Thebes.

Horse tales

This week saw a long and brutally hard literary discussion at Newmarket as the judges met to discuss the destination of the Martin Wills Memorial Prize, which rewards young people writing about racing. I was one of said judges, which added to the volume, if not the quality, of discussion.

I am delighted that we gave the award to Ann Scott, 22, from Dublin, for a very sparky piece about Dublin's urban horses. Ben McFarlane was runner-up; Tessa Hetherington won the junior prize.

CRICKET

Selectors take note as Butcher leaves The Rest behind

By Simon Wilde

EDGBASTON (first day of four, The Rest won toss): England A have scored 272 for two wickets against The Rest

MARK BUTCHER will face sterner tests than this one, but the unbeaten century that he put together with painstaking care yesterday will do for starters. Many believe that Butcher, 24, could serve England's cause well this summer and, with competition for batting places stiff, this was just the start that he needed.

Butcher, the leading run-scorer for England A on their winter tour of Australia, was watched on the first day of this Tetley Shield match by all three England selectors, who spent the afternoon confined to the pavilion in conferences.

Every time they looked up, they must have been reminded that, if they need another left-hander to open the innings with Michael Atherton against Australia — and Nick Knight, the incumbent, will miss the start of the season after breaking his hand in New Zealand — they may not need to search far.

Butcher looked in little trouble and nor did Jason Gallian, who also scored a century. Together, they shared a first-wicket partnership of 237.

Having been asked to bat under overcast skies by Mark Ramprakash, captaining The Rest, they played and missed a number of times, Simon Brown, the left-arm seamer, swinging the ball away awkwardly to Butcher but rarely making the right-handed Gallian play. However, they survived to make hay against far less experienced operators. Butcher hit 20 fours and a six in his 129 not out, Gallian 18 in his 106.

Butcher's form was not the only encouraging aspect to the day. So, too, was the form of Alex Tudor, the young Surrey fast bowler. Without ever "slipping" himself — he ran in off 12 unhurried paces during his three spells — he made every inch of his 6ft 5in count, Warren taking the ball above his head even after dropping well back.

Tudor, one of three members of the England Under-19 bowling attack on show, came on to bowl the thirteenth over of the day, and his second ball narrowly failed to have Butcher caught behind off an inside edge. Then, in his fifth over, he almost had Gallian taken at third slip, but Solanki's claim for a low catch was turned down by umpire Bird.

Tudor's sharpest spell was the one that he bowled after tea, when he produced a beauty to clip the off stump of Vaughan, who perhaps paid the price for waiting so long to get to the wicket. It was the blow that Tudor administered to Butcher's left hand that then convinced Bird that the light was too bad for play to continue 50 minutes before stumps.

Tudor was one of the successes of the under-19 winter tour of Pakistan, but it may be premature to expect too much of a player who failed to appear for Surrey in the county championship last year because of back injury. Although he has filled out, he remains slender and physically fragile, and will have to guard carefully against further breakdowns.

Ben Hollioake and Dean Cosker, Tudor's under-19 confrères, did not perform badly but finished without a wicket and will have learnt much from bowling against players determined to give nothing away. Between them, Tudor, Hollioake and Cosker had just 13 first-class appearances to their credit before this game, and Solanki is hardly long in the tooth.

Silverwood, a veteran of 22, became Ramprakash's mainstay, and a decent job of it he did too. He it was who accounted for Gallian, who chopped a catch to Hollioake.

Chapman relishes first-class return

By Our Sports Staff

HEADINGLEY (third day of four): Lancashire, with all their second-innings wickets in hand, need 106 runs to beat Yorkshire

COLIN CHAPMAN, their second-string wicketkeeper, made the most of a rare opportunity to occupy the crease for Yorkshire in the four-day first-class match against Lancashire at Headingley. Chapman, 25, scored a career-best 80 and frustrated Lancashire's attempts to win the match in three days.

In only his ninth first-class innings in eight seasons, Chapman resisted for 4½ hours, faced 181 balls and hit ten fours. His seventh-wicket stand of 94 with Hamilton had left Lancashire looking a little ragged until Hamilton ran himself out when one short of his fifty.

Despite a flourish from Byas, Lancashire moved purposefully towards their first victory in five non-championship, first-class meetings between the sides.

On a pitch of variable bounce, Peter Martin spearheaded the Lancashire bowling effort to finish with figures of four for 53. He was also responsible for removing the obdurate Chapman, who was undone by some unexpected extra bounce and edged to Fairbrother at slip. Yorkshire's innings was finally wrapped up shortly before the close, leaving Lancashire the apparent formality of making 106 for victory today.

At Taunton, Graeme Hick underlined the strength of his resolve to force his way back into the thoughts of the England selectors by scoring 178 off 124 balls for Worcestershire against Somerset.

Tim Curtis scored 98 in a Worcestershire total of 391 for five, but Somerset rose to the challenge and reached their target with two balls to spare.

Mervyn Kitchen, George Sharp, David Shepherd and Peter Willey have been appointed as umpires for the Ashes series this summer.

YORKSHIRE: First Innings 289 (B Parker 85 not out, M J Wood 81; G Yates 4 for 46)

Second Innings

M D Moxon c Fairbrother b Flintoff	10
M J Wood lbw b Martin	21
*D Byas c Haynes b Green	39
R A Kettleborough lbw b Martin	1
B Parker c Lloyd b Martin	36
†C A Chapman c Fairbrother b Martin	80
A G Wharf c Green b Watkinson	5
G M Hamilton run out	49
G J Batty b Austin	18
R D Stemp b Austin	16
M J Hoggard not out	1
Extras (b 2, lb 14, w 4, nb 2)	22
Total	298

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-32, 2-39, 3-47, 4-79, 5-127, 6-144, 7-238, 8-280, 9-282

BOWLING: Martin 30-9-53-4; Green 24-8-77-1; Flintoff 10-6-11-1; Austin 25.3-8-65-2; Watkinson 10-3-32-1; Yates 14-4-41-0; Titchard 2-0-3-0.

LANCASHIRE: First Innings 482 (G D Lloyd 225, I D Austin 83)

Umpires: V. E Palmer and R A White

CHRIS TURVEY

Butcher sweeps a ball from Cosker at Edgbaston yesterday, watched by Warren, the wicketkeeper, and Adams

Food for thought in Leicestershire feast

By Pat Gibson

FENNER'S (first day of three, Cambridge University won toss): Leicestershire have scored 430 for three wickets against Cambridge University

JACK BIRKENSHAW, the Leicestershire cricket manager, spent most of yesterday trying to find an overseas player to replace Phil Simmons, the inspirational West Indies all-rounder who did so much to take the county championship to Grace Road last season.

He missed watching two young batsmen of contrasting styles and fortune who could make his problem less acute. Ian Sutcliffe, who did not play in a single championship game last year because Leicestershire needed only 13 players, missed what would have been his second first-class century by one run.

Then Aftab Habib helped himself to an unbeaten 169 as Leicestershire piled up a score that smacked of overkill considering the quality of the opposition.

Everything is relative, of course, and they are unlikely to come across another attack as undemanding or fielding as sloppy as Cambridge University's was on the bleakest day that we have had this spring, yet there was still plenty to commend about Sutcliffe's application and Habib's flair. Sutcliffe, who never failed when he was playing for Oxford against Cambridge, had moved smoothly to 99 when Robin Jones switched from off breaks to leg breaks, got one to turn from the rough and bowled him through the gate.

To add to Sutcliffe's chagrin, he then had to watch Habib, who had looked far less secure, sail past his 100, Stevens, making his first-class debut, strike the ball sweetly for a while and Dakin bludgeon his way to 88 not out.

Birkenshaw, meanwhile, had arrived to report that he had no luck so far. He is negotiating with an as yet unnamed South African. Unless he signs today, Leicestershire will probably wait for Simmons to return when the West Indian season finishes at the end of May.

Relentless tropical rain in Georgetown, Guyana, forced the abandonment of the second day of the fifth Test match between West Indies and India yesterday without a ball being bowled. Negative bowling and timid batting restricted India to 194 for two on the first day.

Morgan makes the running for Oxford

By Michael Henderson

THE PARKS (first day of three, Oxford University won toss): Hampshire, with all first-innings wickets in hand, are 234 runs behind Oxford University

OXFORD University enjoyed a much better day yesterday than seemed likely when they lost their first six wickets for 107. They felt sufficiently bold to declare at 6pm, a liberty that they will not often be able to indulge, but the light was not clear enough for them to take a wicket or two before the close. The Hampshire openers accepted an offer to go off in the middle of the second over.

A fine innings of 60 on his university debut by Peter Morgan, a 24-year-old South African who is reading social studies at Keble College, steadied the Oxonian ship after a loss of nerve in mid-innings. In accordance with his age, this was a mature performance as, partnered by Chetan Patel, he added 99 for the seventh wicket.

Morgan struck the ball so cleanly that all but four of his 17 scoring strokes were boundaries. He pulled a six off James, hit a dozen fours and should not be batting at No 7 for long. Either he has a superb eye or he does not like running. Mind you, if you have been to Eton, as he has, you can usually find somebody else to do your running for you.

Bowling teams out twice will undoubtedly be Hampshire's problem this season. They are missing three batsmen in this match in Hayden, the new overseas player, Laney and Smith, but most of their bowling resources were displayed yesterday and they did not look threatening.

Lightfoot, a man of three initials (the R stands for Rufus, no less), adorned the morning with some attractive strokes in the way that left-handers often do. It was a bit of a pity that he fell in the forties for the second time this week, just as he was hinting that a decent score was within him.

His touch was quite beyond anything that Haynes, the opener, could find. For almost an hour and a half, he prodded around miserably for nine, until, aiming to hit Udal's first ball, a looping full toss, through the on side, he was horribly (and somewhat comically) leg before. The ball was flighted so high, in fact, that he might have "lost" it above the sightscreen. Full marks to Udal, therefore, for this piece of enterprise, whether it was scripted or not.

YESTERDAY'S SCOREBOARDS

Tetley's Shield

England A v The Rest

EDGBASTON (first day of four, The Rest won toss): England A have scored 272 for two wickets against The Rest

ENGLAND A: First Innings

M A Butcher not out	129
J E R Gallian c Hollioake b Silverwood	106
M P Vaughan b Tudor	10
A McGrath not out	1
Extras (lb 15, w 2, nb 9)	26
Total (2 wkts)	272

*A J Hollioake, M A Ealham, †W K Hegg, P M Such, G Chapple, A J Harris and D W Headley to bat

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-237, 2-271

BOWLING: Silverwood 16-4-63-1; Brown 19-5-56-0; Tudor 15.2-4-39-1; Hollioake 9-1-45-0; Solanki 5-2-18-0; Cosker 14-2-36-0

THE REST: J S Laney, D L Maddy, C J Adams, *M R Ramprakash, B C Hollioake, †R J Warren, V S Solanki, D A Cosker, A J Tudor, S J E Brown, C E W Silverwood

Umpires: H D Bird and R Palmer

University matches

Cambridge University v Leicestershire

FENNER'S (first day of three, Cambridge University won toss): Leicestershire have scored 430 for three wickets against Cambridge University

LEICESTERSHIRE: First Innings

V J Wells c House b P S Jones	27
I J Sutcliffe b R O Jones	99
A Habib not out	169
D I Stevens lbw b How	27
J M Dakin not out	88
Extras (b 5, lb 7, nb 8)	20
Total (3 wkts)	430

*J J Whitaker, †P A Nixon, D J Millns, J Ormond, M T Brimson and G J Parsons to bat

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-61, 2-229, 3-278

BOWLING: P S Jones 11.4-0-51-1; How 17-1-81-1; Dawson 12.2-1-64-0; Freeth 13-0-78-0; R O Jones 18-1-70-1; House 20-3-74-0

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY: E T Smith, J R Ratledge, *A Singh, W J House, R O Jones, O Hughes, M W Dawson, P S Jones, †D R H Churton, J W O Freeth, E J How

Umpires: R Julian and M R Benson

Oxford University v Hampshire

THE PARKS (first day of three, Oxford University won toss): Hampshire, with all first-innings wickets in hand, are 234 runs behind Oxford University

OXFORD UNIVERSITY: First Innings

R D Hudson lbw b Connor	9
J E Haynes lbw b Udal	9
C G R Lightfoot lbw b Milburn	44
*M A Wagh b James	15
B W Byrne lbw b James	2
J A G Fulton c White b James	6
P G Morgan c Whitaker b Connor	60
C Patel b Milburn	35
†A P Scrini not out	11
J M M Averis b Milburn	6
D P Mather not out	5
Extras (b 7, lb 18, w 12, nb 4)	41
Total (9 wkts dec)	243

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-10, 2-60, 3-83, 4-95, 5-105, 6-107, 7-206, 8-218, 9-233.

BOWLING: Connor 16-2-57-2; Milburn 18-8-35-3; Stephenson 10-2-29-0; Mascarenhas 13-3-35-0; Udal 18-11-26-1; James 16-6-36-3; Whitaker 1-1-0-0

HAMPSHIRE: First Innings

G W White not out	7
*J P Stephenson not out	0
Extras (nb 2)	2
Total (no wkt)	9

M Keech, K D James, W S Kendall, P R Whitaker, †A N Aymes, S D Udal, A D Mascarenhas, C A Connor and S M Milburn to bat.

BOWLING: Averis 1-0-7-0; Patel 0.2-0-2-0

Umpires: J H Harris and N A Mallender

Fifth Test match

West Indies v India

GEORGETOWN (second day of five, India won toss): India have scored 194 for two wickets against West Indies

INDIA: First Innings

A D Jadeja c Browne b Bishop	8
N S Sidhu c Hooper b Walsh	36
R S Dravid not out	71
*S R Tendulkar not out	62
Extras (b 3, lb 5, w 1, nb 8)	17
Total (2 wkts)	194

M Azharuddin, †N R Mongia, A R Kumble, S Joshi, D Ganesh, A P Kuruvilla and B K V Prasad to bat.

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-32, 2-68.

BOWLING: Ambrose 18-11-16-0; Bishop 15-5-31-1; Rose 15.4-4-44-0; Walsh 16.2-6-45-1; Hooper 5-1-13-0; Chanderpaul 19-6-37-0.

WEST INDIES: S L Campbell, S C Williams, S Chanderpaul, B C Lara, C L Hooper, R I C Holder, †C O Browne, I R Bishop, C E L Ambrose, F A Rose, *C A Walsh.

Umpires: E Nicholls (West Indies) and G Sharp (England)

COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO THE WEEKEND FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 3.0 unless stated
* denotes all-ticket match
Pools coupon numbers in brackets

FA Carling Premiership

(1) Arsenal v Blackburn
(-) Aston Villa v Tottenham
(2) Chelsea v Leicester
(-) Liverpool v Manchester Utd (11.15)
(-) Middlesbrough v Sunderland
(3) Newcastle v Derby
(4) Nottingham Forest v Leeds
(5) Sheffield Wednesday v Wimbledon
(-) Southampton v Coventry
(6) West Ham v Everton

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Man Utd	33	19	9	5	68	38	66
Liverpool	34	18	10	6	57	30	64
Arsenal	34	18	9	7	57	28	63
Newcastle	33	16	9	8	64	39	57
Aston Villa	34	16	8	10	43	30	56
Sheff Wed	33	13	14	6	44	39	53
Wimbledon	33	13	10	10	44	40	49
Chelsea	34	13	10	11	53	53	49
Tottenham	34	12	6	16	40	46	42
Derby	34	10	12	12	41	51	42
Leeds	34	11	9	14	26	36	42
Everton	35	10	11	14	41	50	41
Leicester	33	10	10	13	38	47	40
Blackburn	33	8	13	12	35	35	37
Coventry	34	8	12	14	32	48	36
Southampton	34	8	10	16	45	53	34
West Ham	33	8	10	15	31	43	34
Sunderland	34	8	10	16	31	51	34
† Middlesbro	32	9	9	14	44	52	33
Nottm Forest	34	6	13	15	29	52	31

† Middlesbrough deducted three points

Nationwide League
First division

(7) Bradford v Birmingham
(8) * Charlton v Portsmouth
(9) Crystal Palace v Barnsley
(10) Grimsby v Reading
(11) Huddersfield v West Bromwich
(12) Manchester City v QPR
(13) Oldham v Bolton
(14) * Oxford Utd v Swindon
(15) Tranmere v Sheffield Utd
(16) Wolverhampton v Southend

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bolton	43	27	12	4	94	50	93
Barnsley	42	21	13	8	70	45	76
Wolves	42	20	9	13	61	47	69
Sheffield Utd	43	19	11	13	73	51	68
Port Vale	43	17	15	11	56	50	66
* Ipswich	42	17	13	12	63	49	64
C Palace	42	17	12	13	71	44	63
Tranmere	43	17	12	14	60	51	63
* Norwich	43	17	11	15	63	63	62
Portsmouth	42	18	8	16	53	48	62
QPR	43	16	12	15	59	57	60
Birmingham	43	15	14	14	47	47	59
Stoke	43	16	10	17	47	55	58
Man City	42	16	9	17	56	54	57
Charlton	42	15	10	17	49	60	55
Reading	42	14	12	16	52	59	54
West Brom	43	13	14	16	66	70	53
Swindon	43	15	8	20	52	67	53
Oxford Utd	43	14	9	20	57	65	51
Huddersfield	43	12	13	18	46	60	49
Bradford	42	10	12	20	43	68	42
Grimsby	42	9	12	21	53	78	39
Oldham	43	9	12	22	48	64	39
Southend	43	8	15	20	40	76	39

* not including last night's match

UNIBOND LEAGUE: Premier division: Barrow v Spennymoor; Bishop Auckland v Knowsley; Blyth Spartans v Marine; Boston v Bamber Bridge; Buxton v Emley; Chorley v Colwyn Bay; Lancaster v Guiseley; Leek v Witton; Runcorn v Accrington Stanley; Winsford v Frickley. First division: Alfreton v Lincoln United; Bradford Pk Ave v Flixton; Congleton v Radcliffe; Droylsden v Matlock Town; Farsley Celtic v Ashton United; Gretna v Eastwood Town; Leigh v Great Harwood; Netherfield v Curzon Ashton; Warrington v Stocksbridge PS; Worksop v Workington

FAI HARP LAGER NATIONAL LEAGUE: Premier division: Derry v St Patrick's Athletic (7.30)

Second division

(—) Brentford v Crewe
(17) Burnley v Rotherham
(—) Bury v Peterborough
(18) Chesterfield v Millwall
(19) Gillingham v Blackpool
(20) Luton v Shrewsbury
(21) Plymouth v Walsall
(—) Preston v Stockport
(22) Wrexham v Watford
(23) Wycombe v Bournemouth
(24) York v Bristol City

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bury	42	22	10	10	59	38	76
Brentford	42	20	14	8	56	38	74
Stockport	41	20	12	9	53	37	72
Luton	42	19	13	10	67	44	70
Crewe	42	21	5	16	51	43	68
Watford	42	16	18	8	43	29	66
Bristol City	42	18	10	14	61	48	64
Walsall	42	18	10	14	53	47	64
Burnley	43	18	9	16	63	50	63
Wrexham	42	15	17	10	47	45	62
Millwall	43	16	13	14	50	50	61
Blackpool	42	15	15	12	52	41	60
Gillingham	42	16	10	16	52	56	58
Chesterfield	40	14	14	12	36	35	56
Bournemouth	43	14	13	16	40	43	55
Bristol Rov	43	14	11	18	43	45	53
Preston	43	15	7	21	44	55	52
Wycombe	43	14	9	20	47	53	51
Plymouth	43	11	17	15	44	55	50
York	42	12	12	18	43	62	48
Shrewsbury	43	11	13	19	49	68	46
Peterborough	43	10	14	19	54	71	44
Notts County	43	7	13	23	32	56	34
Rotherham	43	6	13	24	34	64	31

Third division

(25) Barnet v Cardiff
(26) Cambridge Utd v Brighton
(27) Chester v Scarborough
(28) Darlington v Hartlepool
(29) Doncaster v Fulham
(30) Hereford v Torquay
(31) Hull v Leyton Orient
(32) Lincoln v Scunthorpe
(33) Northampton v Exeter
(34) Swansea v Mansfield

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Wigan	44	24	9	11	79	51	81
Fulham	43	23	11	9	69	38	80
Carlisle	43	22	12	9	62	40	78
Swansea	43	20	7	16	57	53	67
Cardiff	43	19	9	15	52	49	66
Northampton	43	18	11	14	62	43	65
Colchester	44	16	16	12	58	49	64
Camb Utd	43	18	10	15	52	54	64
Chester	43	16	16	11	49	41	64
Mansfield	43	15	16	12	43	39	61
Lincoln	43	16	12	15	66	67	60
Scarborough	43	15	15	13	63	65	60
Scunthorpe	43	17	9	17	58	59	60
Barnet	43	13	16	14	41	42	55
Hull	43	12	18	13	41	44	54
Rochdale	43	12	16	15	51	55	52
L Orient	43	13	12	18	45	54	51
Darlington	43	13	10	20	60	73	49
Torquay	43	13	10	20	44	56	49
Doncaster	43	13	9	21	50	64	48
Exeter	43	12	12	19	46	62	48
Hereford	43	11	12	20	47	61	45
Hartlepool	43	12	8	23	45	63	44
† Brighton	43	12	8	23	50	68	42

† Brighton deducted two points

Vauxhall Conference

(—) Altrincham v Dover
(—) Bath v Welling
(—) Halifax v Hayes
(—) Hednesford v Slough
(—) Morecambe v Kidderminster
(—) Southport v Stevenage
(—) Woking v Gateshead

SMIRNOFF IRISH LEAGUE: Premier division: Ards v Cliftonville; Crusaders v Coleraine; Glenavon v Portadown; Linfield v Glentoran. First division: Ballymena v Omagh; Carrick v Ballyclare; Larne v Distillery; Newry v Bangor.

Bell's Scottish League
Premier division

(35) Hearts v Dunfermline
(36) Kilmarnock v Hibernian
(37) Motherwell v Dundee Utd

First division

(38) Clydebank v Falkirk
(39) Dundee v St Mirren
(40) Greenock Morton v Airdrie
(41) St Johnstone v East Fife
(42) Stirling v Partick

Second division

(43) Berwick v Hamilton
(44) Clyde v Ayr
(45) Livingston v Dumbarton
(46) Stenhousemuir v Queen of South
(47) Stranraer v Brechin

Third division

(—) Albion v Arbroath
(48) Cowdenbeath v Alloa
(49) East Stirling v Inverness CT
(—) Montrose v Queen's Park
(—) Ross County v Forfar

DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Premier division: Ashford v Cheltenham, Burton Albion v Hastings, Chelmsford v Atherstone, Dorchester v Worcester City; Gloucester v Gravesend and Northfleet; Halesowen v Sudbury Town, King's Lynn v Crawley; Newport AFC v Gresley; Nuneaton v Cambridge City; Salisbury v Baldock; Sittingbourne v Merthyr. Midland division: Hinckley Town v Sutton Coldfield Town; Ilkeston v Redditch; Moor Green v Evesham; Paget R v Corby; RC Warwick v Bedworth, Rothwell v Stafford, Shepshed D v Raunds T; Stourbridge v Solihull Boro; Tamworth v Dudley Town; VS Rugby v Grantham. Southern division: Bashley v Weston-super-Mare; Buckingham Town v Newport (IoW); Clevedon v Fareham; Erith and Belvedere v Weymouth; Fisher London v Cirencester Town; Forest Green v Dartford; Margate v Cinderford; Tonbridge Angels v Havant; Trowbridge v Fleet T; Witney v St Leonards; Yate v Waterlooville

ICIS LEAGUE: Premier division: Aylesbury v Enfield; Boreham Wood v Heybridge; Bromley v Oxford City; Carshalton v Dulwich; Dagenham and Redbridge v Yeading; Grays v Chertsey; Harrow v Sutton United; Hitchin v Hendon; Kingstonian v St Albans; Staines v Bishop's Stortford; Yeovil v Purfleet. First division: Basingstoke v Abingdon Town; Berkhamsted v Aldershot Town; Canvey Island v Chesham; Croydon v Hampton; Maidenhead United v Walton and Hersham; Marlow v Billericay; Molesey v Bognor Regis; Thame v Leyton Pennant; Tooting and Mitcham v Whyteleafe; Wokingham v Uxbridge; Worthing v Barton Rovers. Second division: Banstead v Leatherhead; Barking v Cheshunt; Bedford T v Egham; Bracknell v Tilbury; Chalfont St Peter v Hungerford; Collier Row and Romford v Witham; Dorking v Leighton Town; Metropolitan Police v Horsham; Wembley v Ware; Windsor and Eton v H Hempstead; Wivenhoe v Edgware. Third division: Camberley v Northwood; East Thurrock v Kingsbury; Flackwell Heath v Braintree; Hertford v Clapton; Lewes v Southall; Tring v Harlow; Wealdstone v Epsom and Ewell; Wingate and Finchley v Hornchurch

GILBERT LEAGUE OF WALES: Caernarfon v Caersws (2.30); Connah's Quay v Porthmadog; Conwy v Briton Ferry; Holywell v Aberystwyth; Llansantffraid v Rhyl; Newtown v Carmarthen Town; Ton Pentre v Ebbw Vale (2.30); Welshpool v Cwmbran.

ESSEX SENIOR LEAGUE: Premier division: Basildon U v Stansted; Brentwood v Ford United; Bowers v Southend Manor; Concord Rangers v Burnham Ramblers; East Ham v Ilford

LONDON SPARTAN LEAGUE: Premier division: Amersham v Hillingdon Boro; Barkingside v Cockfosters; Beaconsfield SYCOB v Brimsdown; Croydon v Haringey; Ruislip Manor v St Margaretsbury; Waltham Abbey v Hanwell

COURAGE COMBINED COUNTIES LEAGUE: Cranleigh v Feltham; Godalming and Guildford v Merstham; Hartley Wintney v Cobham; Raynes Park Vale v Walton Casuals; Reading Town v Corinthian-Casuals; Sandhurst v Ash; Viking Sports v Farnham; Westfield v Netherne.

MINERVA SOUTH MIDLANDS LEAGUE: Premier division: Bedford v Hoddesdon; Buckingham Athletic v Arlesey; Langford v Milton Keynes; Potters Bar v London Colney; Toddington v Royston; Welwyn Garden v Brache Sparta.

SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE: Premier division: Bideford v Paulton R; Bridgwater v Chippenham; Brislington v Elmore; Chard v Bristol Manor Farm; Mangotsfield v Torrington; Taunton v Calne; Tiverton v Odd Down.

JEWSON EASTERN COUNTIES LEAGUE: Premier division: Gorleston v Newmarket; Great Yarmouth v Sudbury W; Hadleigh U v Felixstowe P and T; Halstead v Fakenham; Harwich and Parkeston v Wroxham; Lowestoft v Clacton; Stowmarket v March; Sudbury Res v Bury Town; Walton v Warboys; Wisbech v Diss; Woodbridge Town v Tiptree

JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE: First division: Totton v Andover; Aerostructures v BAT; Bournemouth v Eastleigh; Brockenhurst v Bemerton Heath; Cowes Sports v Christchurch; Downton v Portsmouth; Gosport v Ryde Sports; Petersfield v East Cowes; Romsey v Lymington; Whitchurch v Thatcham Town

UNIJET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE: First division: Arundel v Oakwood; Hailsham v Portfield; Hassocks v Langney Sports; Horsham YMCA v Shoreham; Pagham v Saltdean; Peacehaven and Telscombe v Wick; Ringmer v Burgess Hill; Southwick v Mile Oak; Three Bridges v Selsey

WINSTONLEAD KENT LEAGUE: First division: Beckenham v Hythe; Cray v Chatham; Crockenhill v Corinthian; Folkestone Invicta v Whitstable Town; Ramsgate v Slade Green; Sheppey v Thamesmead

HELLENIC LEAGUE: Premier division: Abingdon United v Banbury; Brackley v Highworth; Burnham v Tuffley; Endsleigh v Kintbury; Shortwood v Lambourn Sports; Swindon Supermarine v Carterton; Wantage v Almondsbury.

UHLSPORT UNITED COUNTIES LEAGUE: Premier division: Boston v Eynesbury; Cogenhoe v Mirrlees Blackstone; Ford Sports v Bourne; Holbeach v Wootton; Potton v St Neots; Spalding v Long Buckby; Stamford v Northampton Spencer; S and L Corby v Stotfold

INTERLINK EXPRESS ALLIANCE: Blakenhall v Sandwell; Boldmere St M v Hinckley Athletic; Bridgnorth v Stapenhill; Halesowen H v Pershore T; Oldbury U v Chasetown; Pelsall V v Knypersley V; Shifnal T v Barwell; Stratford T v Rushall O; Industrial Rewinds League Cup: Semi-finals, second leg: Bloxwich Town v Rocester; Willenhall v West Midlands Police

ENDSLEIGH MIDLAND COMBINATION: Premier division: Coleshill v Alvechurch; Coventry Sphinx v Meir KA; Massey Ferguson v Bilston Community College; Richmond Swifts v David Lloyd; Shirley v Highgate; Southam v Kenilworth; Studley BKL v Knowle; Wellesbourne v Bolehall S; West Midland Fire Service v Handrahan Timbers

BANKS'S BREWERY LEAGUE: Premier division: Darlaston v Westfields; Ettingshall Ht v Brierley Hill T; Gornal Res v Cradley Town; Hill Top R v Walsall Wood; Stafford T v Stourport S; Tividale v Wolverhampton United.

NORTH WEST COUNTIES LEAGUE: First division: Chadderton v Blackpool Rovers; Holker Old Boys v Glossop North End; Kidsgrove v Burscough; Maine Road v Bootle; Mossley v Atherton Collieries; Nantwich Town v Rossendale; Penrith v Trafford; St Helens v Clitheroe; Vauxhall GM v Darwen

NORTHERN COUNTIES EAST LEAGUE: Premier division: Armthorpe Welfare v Thackley; Arnold v Glasshoughton Welfare; Ashfield v Pickering; Belper Town v Ossett Albion; Brigg Town v North Ferriby; Denaby v Maltby MW; Hallam v Liversedge; Ossett Town v Hatfield Main; Pontefract Cols v Hucknall Town; Selby v Sheffield

FEDERATION BREWERY NORTHERN LEAGUE: First division: Bedlington Terriers v Whitby; Consett v Crook; Durham v Tow Law; Easington v Guisborough; RTM Newcastle v Whickham; Shildon v Morpeth

PRESS & JOURNAL HIGHLAND LEAGUE: Brora v Elgin; Cove v Peterhead; Forres Mechanics v Keith; Fort William v Clachnacuddin; Fraserburgh v Rothes; Huntly v Buckie Thistle; Wick Academy v Lossiemouth

SOUTH EAST COUNTIES LEAGUE: First division: Arsenal v Leyton Orient (11.0); Cambridge Utd v Southend (11.0); Fulham v Charlton (11.0); Gillingham v Norwich (11.0); Portsmouth v Millwall (11.0); Queens Park Rangers v West Ham (11.0); Watford v Tottenham (11.0). Second division: Barnet v Bournemouth (11.0); Luton v Colchester (11.0); Oxford Utd v Bristol Rovers (11.0); Swindon v Bristol City (11.0); Wimbledon v Brentford (11.0); Wycombe v Brighton (11.0); Crystal Palace v Southampton (11.0)

ARTHURIAN LEAGUE: Premier division: Chigwellians v Foresters; Cholmeleians v Brentwoods; Reptonians v Witterians

SOUTHERN OLYMPIAN LEAGUE: Senior one: Old Finchleians v Nottsborough; Parkfield v Ulysses; St Mary's Coll v Southgate County

SOUTHERN AMATEUR LEAGUE: First division: Crouch End Vampires v Polytechnic; East Barnet OG v Civil Service; NatWest Bank v West Wickham.

OLD BOYS' LEAGUE: Premier division: Latymer OB v Old Tenisonians; Old Kingsburians v Glyn OB; Old Meadonians v Cardinal Manning OB

SCHOOLS MATCH: Under-15 International: England v France (at Old Trafford)

RUGBY UNION

Kick-off 3.0 unless stated

Courage Clubs Championship
First division

Bath v Orrell
Bristol v London Irish
Gloucester v Harlequins
Leicester v Saracens (2.15)
West Hartlepool v Northampton

Second division

Bedford v London Scottish
Blackheath v Waterloo
Coventry v Moseley
Nottingham v Rugby
Richmond v Wakefield
Rotherham v Newcastle

Third division

Clifton v London Welsh
Exeter v Liverpool St Helens
Harrogate v Havant
Lydney v Morley
Reading v Rosslyn Park
Walsall v Redruth
Wharfedale v Otley

Fourth division north

Aspatria v Kendal
Hereford v Birmingham/Solihull
Nuneaton v Manchester
Sandal v Preston Grasshoppers
Sheffield v Worcester
Stourbridge v Stoke-on-Trent
Winnington Park v Lichfield

Fourth division south

Askeans v Newbury
Camberley v High Wycombe
Charlton Park v Plymouth
Cheltenham v Metropolitan Police
North Walsham v Barking
Tabard v Berry Hill
Weston-super-Mare v Henley

SOUTH WEST: First division: Brixham v Salisbury; Gloucester Old Boys v Matson; Maidenhead v Launceston; St Ives v Camborne; Stroud v Bridgwater; Torquay v Barnstaple

MIDLANDS: First division: Belgrave v Wolverhampton; Broadstreet v Whitchurch; Burton v Westleigh; Camp Hill v Syston; Derby v Stockwood Park; Hinckley v Stafford; Leamington v Scunthorpe; Leighton Buzzard v Mansfield

NORTH: First division: Hull Ionians v West Park Bramhope; New Brighton v Macclesfield; Sedgley Park v Broughton Park; Stockton v Bridlington; Tynedale v Bradford and Bingley

CIS county championship
Final

Cumbria v Somerset
(at Twickenham)

CIS UNDER-21 COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP: Final: Dorset and Wiltshire v Yorkshire (at Twickenham, 12.30)

Welsh League
First division

Bridgend v Caerphilly (2.30)
Cardiff v Dunvant (2.30)
Ebbw Vale v Pontypridd (2.30)
Neath v Newport (2.30)
Newbridge v Swansea (2.30)
Treorchy v Llanelli (2.30)

Second division

Abertillery v Aberavon (2.30)
Bonymaen v Blackwood (2.30)
Cross Keys v Ystradgynlais (2.30)
Llandovery v Abercynon (2.30)
Pontypool v Maesteg (2.30)
Cardiff Inst v South Wales Police (2.30)

THIRD DIVISION: Builth Wells v Merthyr; Mountain Ash v Llanharan; Penarth v Tondu; Pyle v Tenby United; Rumney v Narberth; Tredegar v Kenfig Hill.

CRICKET

Tetley's Shield
11.0, second day of four
EDGBASTON: England A v The Rest

University matches
11.30, second day of three
FENNER'S: Cambridge University v Leicestershire
THE PARKS: Oxford University v Hampshire

County match
11.0, final day of four
HEADINGLEY: Yorkshire v Lancashire

OTHER MATCH: Cardiff (one day) Glamorgan v Minor Counties Wales (11.0)

HOCKEY

WOMEN'S COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP: Preliminary round: A division: Telford, Cannock, Surbiton (at Crosby, 10.30). B division: Melton Mowbray, Portsmouth, Ipswich (at Cleator Moor, 10.30)

WOMEN'S CLUB MATCHES: Aldridge v Lichfield; Bracknell v Woking; Bury St Edmunds v Cambridge City; Disley v Chesterfield; Letchworth v Bedford; Oxted v Mid-Sussex; Sevenoaks v Sudbury; Staines v Rickmansworth; Taunton CS v ECV; Wednesbury v Old Sils; Whitchurch v Newport

WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENT: Slovakia v Poland (12.0), Wales v Ireland (2.30) (at WIS, Cardiff)

WOMEN'S INTER-LEAGUE TOURNAMENT: Poynton v Tulse Hill (10.0); Aldridge v Bury St Edmunds (12.0); Colwall v Poynton (2.0); Tulse Hill v Bury St Edmunds (4.0) (at The Stadium, Milton Keynes).

WOMEN'S SOUTH LEAGUE: Play-offs: Eastbourne, Fleet, Slough II, Teddington Woking 1A (at Bisham Abbey, 9.0)

WOMEN'S CLUB MATCHES: Deeside R v Colwyn Bay; Newport v Gloucester C; Rover Cowley v Bracknell; Hereford v St Fagans

RUGBY LEAGUE

NATIONAL CONFERENCE LEAGUE: Premier division: Lock Lane v Wigan St Patrick's (2.30), Mayfield v West Hull (2.30). First division: East Leeds v Walney Central (2.30). Second division: Milford v Normanton (2.30), York Acorn v Ovenden (2.30).

BNFL NATIONAL CUP: Semi-finals: Dudley Hill v Askam; Ellenborough v Siddal.

ALLIANCE CHAMPIONSHIP: Hull Kingston Rovers v Salford

OTHER SPORT

BADMINTON: Friends Provident grand slam (at Redbridge)

SNOOKER: Embassy world championship (at Sheffield)

SPEEDWAY: Elite League: Coventry v Ipswich (7.30); Swindon v Poole (7.30). Speedway Star Cup: Bradford v Belle Vue (7.30); Eastbourne v Peterborough (7.30). Premier League Cup: Berwick v Stoke (7.0).

TABLE TENNIS: Commonwealth championships (at Glasgow)

TOMORROW

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 3.0 unless stated

Nationwide League
First division

Stoke v Port Vale (2.10)

Second division

Bristol Rovers v Notts County

Auto Windscreens Shield
Final

Carlisle v Colchester
(at Wembley, 1.30)

Bell's Scottish League
Premier division

Celtic v Aberdeen

DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Premier division: Crawley v Nuneaton. Southern division: St Leonards v Buckingham Town.

GILBERT LEAGUE OF WALES: Barry v Cemaes Bay; Inter Cable-Tel v Bangor City.

FAI HARP LAGER NATIONAL LEAGUE: Premier division: Bohemians v Sligo (3.15); Bray v Finn Harps (3.15); Dundalk v Cork; Home Farm v Shelbourne (3.15)

WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL MATCH: Wales v Greece (at Stebonheath Park, Llanelli FC)

FA WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE: National division: Arsenal v Everton (at Edgware Town FC, 2.0); Liverpool v Wembley (at Kirkby Sports Stadium, 12.0). Postponed: Doncaster v Tranmere

RUGBY UNION

Kick-off 3.0 unless stated

Courage Clubs Championship
First division

Wasps v Sale
(at Loftus Road)

Third division

Leeds v Fylde

Tennents 1556 Cup
Quarter-finals

Boroughmuir v Watsonians (2.0)
Kirkcaldy v Dundee HSFP (2.0)
Peebles v Heriot's FP (2.0)
West of Scotland v Melrose (2.0)

TENNENTS 1556 BOWL: Quarter-finals: Grangemouth v Ross High; Linlithgow v Biggar; Preston Lodge v Selkirk; Trinity Academicals v Hillhead/Jordanhill.

TENNENTS 1556 SHIELD: Quarter-finals: Aberdeen GSFP v Glenrothes; Edinburgh Academicals v Cume; Glasgow High/Kelvinside v Jed-Forest; St Boswells v Hawick.

WOMEN'S BREAD FOR LIFE CUP: Final: Richmond v Saracens (at Stoop memorial ground, 5.30).

RUGBY LEAGUE

Kick-off 3.0 unless stated

Stones Super League

Castleford v Halifax (3.30)
Sheffield v Leeds (6.35)
St Helens v Warrington
Wigan v Oldham

First division

Hull v Huddersfield (3.15)
Keighley v Dewsbury
Swinton v Hull KR
Widnes v Wakefield
Workington v Featherstone

Second division

Batley v Hunslet (3.15)
Carlisle v Rochdale (6.0)
Doncaster v Leigh
Prescot v Bramley
York v Barrow

CRICKET

Tetley's Shield
11.0, third day of four
EDGBASTON: England A v The Rest

University match
11.30, final day of three
FENNER'S: Cambridge University v Leicestershire

OTHER MATCH: Cardiff (one day). Glamorgan v Minor Counties Wales (11.0).

HOCKEY

WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENT: Ireland v Slovakia (9.30); Wales v Poland (1.0) (at WIS, Cardiff)

WOMEN'S INTER-LEAGUE TOURNAMENT: Aldridge v Colwall (10.0); Bury St Edmunds v Poynton (12.0); Tulse Hill v Aldridge (2.0) (at The Stadium, Milton Keynes)

WOMEN'S SOUTH LEAGUE: Play-offs (at Bisham Abbey, 9.0).

WOMEN'S NORTH CLUBS CHAMPIONSHIP (at Concord LC, Sheffield, 10.0)

WOMEN'S COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP: Preliminary round: A division: Telford, Cannock, Surbiton (at Crosby, 9.30). B division: Melton Mowbray, Portsmouth, Ipswich (at Cleator Moor, 9.30).

OTHER SPORT

AMERICAN FOOTBALL: World League (WLAF): Rhein v London Monarchs, Scottish Claymores v Barcelona (at Murrayfield, 3.0)

BADMINTON: Friends Provident grand slam (at Redbridge).

BASKETBALL: Budweiser League: Championship play-offs: Quarter-final, third leg: London v Newcastle (6.30)

MOTOR RACING: British touring car championship (at Silverstone)

SNOOKER: Embassy world championship (at Sheffield)

SPEEDWAY: Premier League Cup: Glasgow v Berwick (6.30), Newcastle v Edinburgh (6.30), Skegness v Long Eaton (6.30)

TABLE TENNIS: Commonwealth championships (at Glasgow)

THE TIMES GUIDE TO THE PREMIERSHIP THIS WEEKEND

ARSENAL

Dennis Bergkamp is in glorious form, and David Platt seems at long last to be finding his goalscoring touch again. Especially pleasing for Arsène Wenger, the manager, is the midfield form of Stephen Hughes who, he says, is maturing and can now last the 90 minutes. With rivals Liverpool and Manchester United locked in morning combat, it is essential Arsenal beat Blackburn. *They will hope Ian Wright, still* chasing Cliff Bastin's record, can resume scoring goals. **BG**

ASTON VILLA

As Villa Park celebrates its centenary today, in a blaze of pomp and pageantry, many fans will still be blissfully unaware that Savo Milosevic, Villa's inconsistent Yugoslav striker, *shares* a common *bond* with *Lord Gyllene, the winner of the* Grand National. They were both bought on the strength of a video. However, the *similarity* does not extend much further, *according to* the latest joke circulating among Villa cynics. Apparently, one achieves goals, the other doesn't. **RK**

BLACKBURN ROVERS

The destination of Paul Ince on his return to England this summer has been the cause of much conjecture. Arsenal and Liverpool are making strong moves to bring the midfield player back home, but *one other club is interested — and has a* head start on the others. That club is Blackburn, and manager-in-waiting Roy Hodgson has had plenty of time to persuade Ince that Rovers will prove the best alternative, given that the pair are the only Englishmen at Internazionale. **DM**

CHELSEA

The game today means so much more to Leicester than to Chelsea *that you wonder if the* Blues will at last show some league form. Humiliated at home by Arsenal, over-run in midweek by Newcastle, the impression is that they are giving their all to the FA Cup. Vialli has a chance to prove a point, even if lack of match practice has blunted his edge of his talents. Jody Morris surely deserves another chance in midfield. You can at least be sure that he will give his all. **BG**

COVENTRY CITY

Gordon Strachan, 40, the Coventry player-manager, faces an awkward decision this afternoon. Does he name himself in the side to play Southampton at The Dell, having so inspired those around him in the 3-1 victory against Chelsea ten days ago, or does he rest his weary bones by making way for Darren Huckerby? Alex Miller, his assistant, has no doubts. "People say this is a game for athletes," he said, "but there is no substitute for speed of thought and sureness of touch." **RK**

DERBY COUNTY

Christian Daily arrived from Dundee United last summer as a midfield player who could also operate as a striker. In January he was pushed into defence as an emergency measure and has remained *there ever since, performing* so capably that Jim Smith, the manager, has predicted an international future in his new role. Not before time, Dailly might feel, having made a record 34 appearances for Scotland at under-21 level. He will *deserve elevation if* he keeps Newcastle at bay today. **RH**

EVERTON

Duncan Ferguson, a formidable force when up against the likes of Liverpool and Manchester United, but a bit tame against clubs such as West Ham, the opponents today, will again be the centre of attention this afternoon. "It does frustrate everyone," Dave Watson, the caretaker player-manager, said. "I realise everyone can't play to their best all the time, but you know what the fellow can do, and if we could get *more out of the big man more* regularly, we'd be OK." **PB**

LEEDS UNITED

Two Leeds success stories — but neither are about the first *team. The* women meet Newcastle in the League Cup final at Harrogate tomorrow; the youth team have reached the FA Youth Cup final. The first team need eight more goals to avoid a new and unwanted record — the lowest aggregate recorded by a team that was not relegated. "We're not firing going forward as much as I would like," George *Graham, the manager, said with masterly* understatement. **PB**

LEICESTER CITY

Kasey Keller flew to Boston within hours of Leicester's *Coca-Cola Cup win on Wednesday* in readiness for the United States' World Cup qualifier against Mexico tomorrow. Martin O'Neill, the manager, is becoming frustrated at losing his goalkeeper so regularly and his relationship with Steve Sampson, the US coach, is becoming strained. "We will have to work out an agreement or get somebody else in," O'Neill *said. Kevin Poole deputises* at Chelsea today. **RH**

LIVERPOOL

Even in the most important week of the season Stan Collymore was again an absentee from training yesterday, although this time he had a more plausible excuse. He lives more than 100 miles from the training ground and the terrorist threat that closed the M6 prevented him from driving there. Roy Evans, the manager, was calm enough upon learning that his star forward was again missing, but it could affect his team selection for the game against Manchester United. **DM**

MANCHESTER UNITED

Alex Ferguson, the manager, is famous for his mind games, but yesterday he was content *with the familiar ploy of leaving his opponents* guessing. Suddenly Schmeichel, Irwin, May and Giggs are in contention, having apparently been ruled out earlier. "They all trained on Thursday, but kicking *the ball is the important thing,* and we'll have to wait and see how they are after today," Ferguson said, adding the sting in the tail — "but I've got the squad who were *superb* at Ewood Park." **PB**

MIDDLESBROUGH

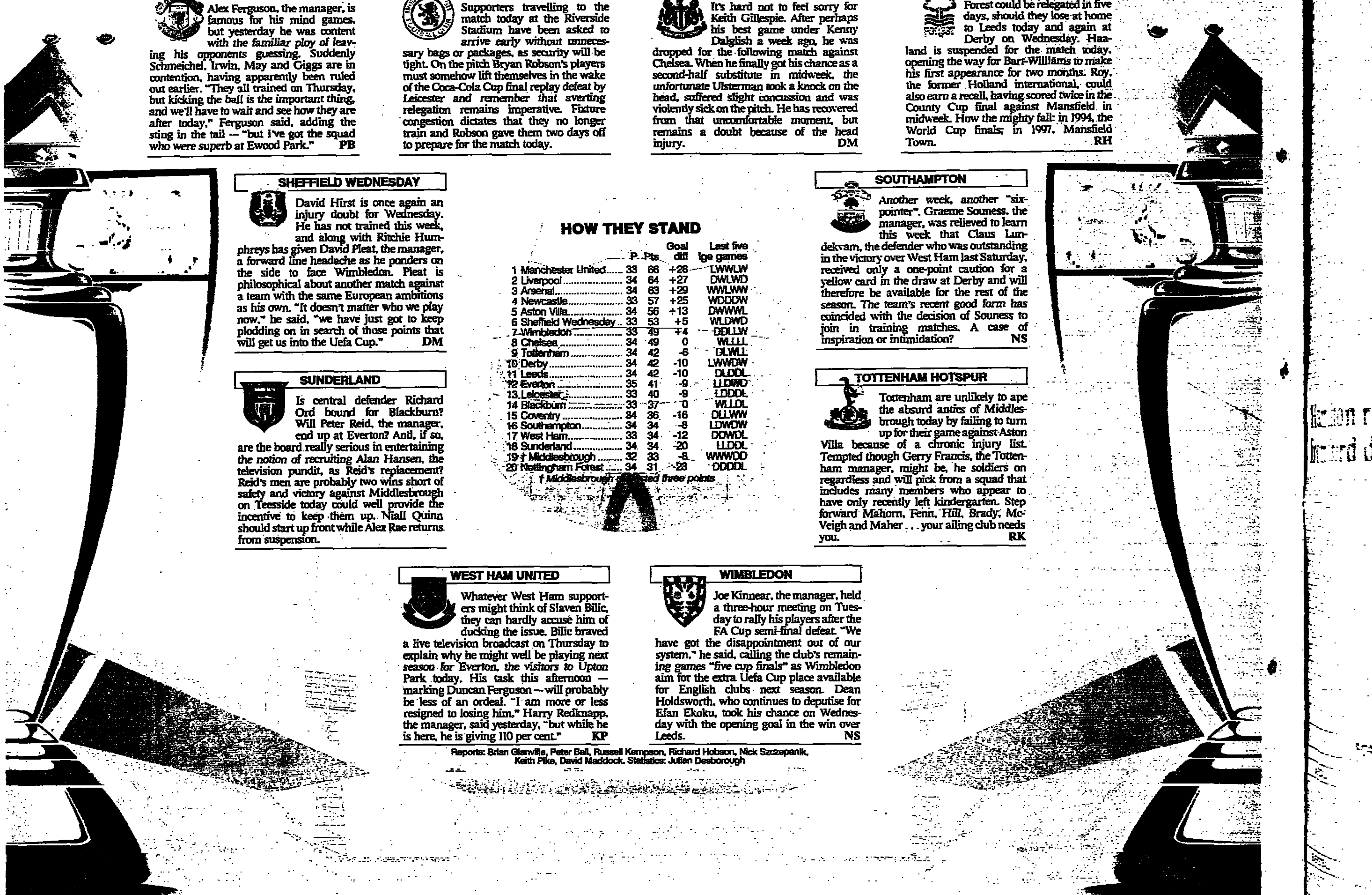
Supporters travelling to the match today at the Riverside Stadium have been asked to *arrive early without* unnecessary bags or packages, as security will be tight. On the pitch Bryan Robson's players must somehow lift themselves in the wake of the Coca-Cola Cup final replay *defeat* by *Leicester and remember that* averting relegation remains imperative. Fixture congestion dictates that they no longer train and Robson gave them two days off to prepare for the match today.

NEWCASTLE UNITED

It's hard not to feel sorry for Keith Gillespie. After perhaps his best game under Kenny Dalglish a week ago, he was dropped for the following match against Chelsea. When he finally got his chance as a second-half substitute in midweek, the *unfortunate* Ulsterman took a knock on the head, suffered slight concussion and was violently sick on the pitch. He has recovered from that uncomfortable moment, but remains a doubt because of the head injury. **DM**

NOTTINGHAM FOREST

Forest could be relegated in five days, should they lose at home to Leeds today and again at Derby on Wednesday. Haaland is suspended for the match today, opening the way for Bart-Williams to make his first appearance for two months. Roy, the former Holland international, could also earn a recall, having scored twice in the County Cup final against Mansfield in midweek. How the mighty fall: in 1994, the World Cup finals; in 1997, Mansfield Town. **RH**



SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY

David Hirst is once again an injury doubt for Wednesday. He has not trained this week, and along with Ritchie Humphreys has given David Pleat, the manager, a forward line headache as he ponders on the side to face Wimbledon. Pleat is philosophical about another match against a team with the same European ambitions as his own. "It doesn't matter who we play now," he said, "we have just got to keep plodding on in search of those points that will get us into the Uefa Cup." **DM**

SUNDERLAND

Is central defender Richard Ord bound for Blackburn? Will Peter Reid, the manager, end up at Everton? And, if so, are the board really serious in entertaining *the notion of recruiting Alan Hansen,* the television pundit, as Reid's replacement? Reid's men are probably two wins short of safety and victory against Middlesbrough on Teesside today could well provide the incentive to keep them up. Niall Quinn should start up front while Alex Rae returns from suspension.

HOW THEY STAND

	P	Pts	Goal diff	Last five lge games
1 Manchester United	33	66	+28	LWWLW
2 Liverpool	34	64	+27	DWLWD
3 Arsenal	34	63	+29	WWLWW
4 Newcastle	33	57	+25	WDDDW
5 Aston Villa	34	56	+13	DWWWL
6 Sheffield Wednesday	33	53	+5	WLDWD
7 Wimbledon	33	49	+4	DDLLW
8 Chelsea	34	49	0	WLLLL
9 Tottenham	34	42	-6	DLWLL
10 Derby	34	42	-10	LWWDW
11 Leeds	34	42	-10	DLDDL
12 Everton	35	41	-9	LLDWD
13 Leicester	33	40	-9	LDDDL
14 Blackburn	33	37	0	WLLDL
15 Coventry	34	36	-16	DLLWW
16 Southampton	34	34	-8	LDWDW
17 West Ham	33	34	-12	DDWDL
18 Sunderland	34	34	-20	LLDDL
19 † Middlesbrough	32	33	-8	WWWDD
20 Nottingham Forest	34	31	-23	DDDDL

† Middlesbrough deducted three points

SOUTHAMPTON

Another week, *another* "six-pointer". Graeme Souness, the manager, was relieved to learn this week that Claus Lundekvam, the defender who was outstanding in the victory over West Ham last Saturday, received only a one-point caution for a yellow card in the draw at Derby and will therefore be available for the rest of the season. The team's recent good *form* has coincided with the decision of Souness to join in training *matches.* A case of inspiration or intimidation? **NS**

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR

Tottenham are unlikely to ape the absurd antics of *Middlesbrough* today by failing to turn up for their game against Aston Villa because of a chronic injury list. Tempted though Gerry Francis, the Tottenham manager, might be, he soldiers on regardless and will pick from a squad that includes many members who appear to have only recently left kindergarten. Step forward Mahorn, Fenn, Hill, Brady, McVeigh and Maher . . . your ailing club needs you. **RK**

WEST HAM UNITED

Whatever West Ham supporters might think of Slaven Bilic, they can hardly accuse him of ducking the issue. Bilic braved a live television broadcast on Thursday to explain why he might well be playing next *season for Everton, the visitors to Upton* Park today. His task this afternoon — marking Duncan Ferguson — will probably be less of an ordeal. "I am more or less resigned to losing him," Harry Redknapp, the manager, said yesterday, "but while he is here, he is giving 110 per cent." **KP**

WIMBLEDON

Joe Kinnear, the manager, held a three-hour meeting on Tuesday to rally his players after the FA Cup semi-final defeat. "We have got the disappointment out of our system," he said, calling the club's remaining games "five cup finals" as Wimbledon aim for the extra Uefa Cup place available for English clubs next season. Dean Holdsworth, who continues to deputise for Efan Ekoku, took his chance on Wednesday with the opening goal in the win over Leeds. **NS**

Reports: Brian Glanville, Peter Ball, Russell Kempson, Richard Hobson, Nick Szczepanik, Keith Pike, David Maddock. Statistics: Julien Desborough

ARSENAL v BLACKBURN ROVERS

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: —, —, —, —, —, —, 0-1, 1-0, 0-0, 0-0.

HOW THEY LINE UP

ARSENAL (from): D Seaman, L Dixon, M Keown, A Adams, S Bould, N Winterburn, S Hughes, D Platt, P Vieira, D Bergkamp, I Wright, R Parlour, P Merson, N Anelka, P Shaw, S Marshall, J Lukic.

BLACKBURN ROVERS (from): T Flowers, J Kenna, G Le Saux, H Berg, *C Hendry, T Sherwood, W McKinlay, J Wilcox, G Flitcroft, P Warhurst,* K Gallacher, G Donis, I Pearce, S Given, P Pedersen, L Bohinen, C Sutton, N Marker, G Croft, G Fenton.

ASTON VILLA v TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: 0-3, —, 2-1, 2-0, 3-2, 0-0, 0-0, 1-0, 1-0, 2-1.

HOW THEY LINE UP

ASTON VILLA (from): M Oakes, F Nelson, A Wright, U Ehiogu, S Staunton, G Southgate, D Hughes, A Townsend, M Draper, I Taylor, D Yorke, S Milosevic, J Joachim, S Murray, G Farrelly, S Curcic, M Bosnich, A Rachel.

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR *(from):* I Walker, D *Austin,* J *Edinburgh,* C Calderwood, J Dozzell, S Campbell, R Vega, A Sinton, E Sheringham, S Nethercott, P Mahorn, N Fenn, D Hill, P McVeigh, G Brady, K Maher, E Baardsen, D Howells.

CHELSEA v LEICESTER CITY

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: 3-1, —, 2-1, —, —, —, —, —, 4-0, —.

HOW THEY LINE UP

CHELSEA (from): C Forrest, E Johnsen, F Leboeuf, F Sinclair, D Petrescu, C Burley, R Di Matteo, J Morris, S Minto, M Hughes, G Vialli, G Zola, A Myers, P Hughes, M Nicholls, P Parker, D Granville, N Colgan.

LEICESTER CITY (from): K Poole, S Grayson, M Whitlow, S Walsh, J Watts, S Prior, J Lawrence, M Elliott, M Izzet, C Hill, F Rolling, S Campbell, S Wilson, N Lennon, G Parker, S Claridge, S Guppy, I Marshall, E Heskey, I Andrews.

LIVERPOOL v MANCHESTER UNITED

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: 0-1, 3-3, 1-0, 0-0, 4-0, 2-0, 1-2, 3-3, 2-0, 2-0.

HOW THEY LINE UP

LIVERPOOL (from): D James, J McAteer, R Jones, B T Kvarme, M Wright, S Harkness, S I Bjornebye, J Barnes, S McManaman, J Redknapp, M Thomas, R Fowler, S Collymore, P Berger, P Babb, N Ruddock, A Warner.

MANCHESTER UNITED (from): P Schmeichel, R van der Gouw, G Neville, P Neville, D Irwin, G Pallister, D May, R Johnsen, D Beckham, P Scholes, R Keane, N Butt, R Giggs, E Cantona, O G Solskjaer, A Cole, K Poborsky, B McClair.

MIDDLESBROUGH v SUNDERLAND

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: —, —, —, 3-0, —, 2-1, —, 4-1, 2-2, —.

HOW THEY LINE UP

MIDDLESBROUGH (from): B Roberts, N Cox, N Pearson, G Festa, S Vickers, V Kinder, C Hignett, R Mustoe, Emerson, Juninho, F Ravanelli, M Beck, C Blackmore, A Moore, P Stamp.

SUNDERLAND (from): L Perez, G Hall, D Kubicki, R Ord, L Howey, A Johnston, A Rae, K Ball, P Bracewell, M Gray, C Waddle, P Stewart, N Quinn, C Woods, M Bridges, S Agnew, J Eriksson, D Williams, C Russell.

NEWCASTLE UNITED v DERBY COUNTY

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: —, 0-0, 0-1, —, —, 2-2, 1-1, —, —, —.

HOW THEY LINE UP

NEWCASTLE UNITED (from): S Hislop, W Barton, S Watson, D Peacock, J Beresford, R Elliott, D Batty, R Lee, F Asprilla, A Shearer, L Ferdinand, L Clark, D Ginola, K Gillespie, P Srnicek.

DERBY COUNTY (from): R Hoult, J Laursen, P McGrath, C Dailly, G Rowett, R van der Laan, P Trollope, A Asanovic, C Powell, A Ward, D Sturridge, M Taylor, D Powell, P Simpson, M Solis, P Wanchope, R Willems, M Gabbiadini.

NOTTINGHAM FOREST v LEEDS UNITED

TICKETS: Seats available

10-YEAR RECORD: —, —, —, —, 4-3, 0-0, 1-1, —, 3-0, 2-1.

HOW THEY LINE UP

NOTTINGHAM FOREST (from): M Crossley, A Fettis, D Henry, D Lyttle, C Cooper, S Pearce, D Phillips, S Chettle, C Allen, S Gemmill, C Bart-Williams, B O'Neil, D Saunders, B Roy, P van Hooijdonk, I Moore, N Jerkan.

LEEDS UNITED (from): N Martyn, G Kelly, G Halle, D Wetherall, R Molenaar, A Dorigo, P Laurent, I Rush, L Bowyer, L Radebe, L Sharpe, D Lilley, B Deane, R Wallace, M Jackson, M Ford, A Gray, M Beeney.

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY v WIMBLEDON

TICKETS: Seats available

10-YEAR RECORD: 0-2, 1-0, 1-1, 0-1, —, 2-0, 1-1, 2-2, 0-1, 2-1.

HOW THEY LINE UP

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY (from): K Pressman, P Atherton, I Nolan, M Pembridge, D Stefanovic, D Walker, G Whittingham, A Booth, S Oakes, S Nicol, B Carbone, W Collins, R Blinker, R Humphreys, L Briscoe, O Donaldson, B Linighan, M Clarke.

WIMBLEDON (from): N Sullivan, K Cunningham, A Kimble, V Jones, D Blackwell, O Leonhardsen, R Earle, D Holdsworth, M Gayle, C Perry, J Goodman, A Reeves, B McAllister, N Ardley, S Castledine, M Harford, D Jupp, A Clarke, J Euell, P Fear, P Heald.

SOUTHAMPTON v COVENTRY CITY

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: 2-0, 1-2, 0-0, 0-0, 2-1, 0-0, 2-2, 1-0, 0-0, 1-0.

HOW THEY LINE UP

SOUTHAMPTON (from): M Taylor, J Dodd, F Benali, C Lundekvam, U van Gobbel, J Magilton, E Berkovic, R Slater, M Oakley, M Evans, E Ostenstad, A Neilson, S Basham, N Maddison, D Beasant, M Le Tissier, R Dryden.

COVENTRY CITY (from): S Ogrizovic, J Filan, P Telfer, R Shaw, B Borrows, P Williams, D Burrows, R Hall, K Richardson, G McAllister, D Dublin, N Whelan, P Ndlovu, D Huckerby, G Strachan, W Boland, E Jess.

WEST HAM UNITED v EVERTON

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: 1-0, 0-0, 0-1, —, —, 0-2, —, 0-1, 2-2, 2-1.

HOW THEY LINE UP

WEST HAM UNITED (from): L Miklosko, S Potts, S Bilic, M Rieper, I Bishop, S Lomas, S Lazaridis, P Kitson, J Hartson, M Hughes, K Rowland, H Porfirio, I Dowie, L Sealey, S Mean, J Moncur, R Ferdinand, M Omoyinmi.

EVERTON (from): N Southall, P Gerrard, E Barrett, D Watson, D Unsworth, R Dunne, T Phelan, M Ball, G Stuart, N Barmby, D Ferguson, M Branch, C Thomsen, J Hills, G Speed.

MONDAY

COVENTRY CITY v ARSENAL

TICKETS: Seats available

10-YEAR RECORD: 2-1, 0-0, 1-0, 0-1, 0-2, 0-1, 0-2, 1-0, 0-1, 0-0.

HOW THEY LINE UP

COVENTRY CITY (from): S Ogrizovic, J Filan, P Telfer, R Shaw, B Borrows, P Williams, D Burrows, R Hall, K Richardson, G McAllister, D Dublin, N Whelan, P Ndlovu, D Huckerby, G Strachan, W Boland, E Jess.

ARSENAL (from): D Seaman, L Dixon, M Keown, A Adams, S Bould, N Winterburn, S Hughes, D Platt, P Vieira, D Bergkamp, I Wright, R Parlour, P Merson, N Anelka, P Shaw, S Marshall, J Lukic.

WHEN TO WATCH ON TELEVISION

Today

11am Sky Sports 1 Liverpool v Manchester United (live)
11pm BBC1 Match of the Day (highlights, includes Liverpool v *Manchester United*)

Tomorrow

10.30am Sky Sports 1 Goals on Sunday

Monday

7pm Sky Sports 1 Coventry City v Arsenal (live)
The official internet site of the FA Carling Premiership is at http://www.fa-carling.com/

Manager's unfamiliar methods find favour with players and supporters

Arsenal play along to their maestro's revolutionary tune

ARSENE WENGER

THE FACE OF FOOTBALL

By Brian Glanville

IAN WALDIE

Wenger quickly won the respect and admiration of his players at Highbury

The jury is no longer out on Arsène Wenger, the Arsenal manager. Whatever the result at home to Blackburn Rovers this afternoon, and the ultimate destination of the FA Carling Premiership title this season, you might say that the moment of truth came last Saturday at Highbury: Tony Adams, that most uncompromising of centre halves, raced upfield, passed to Dennis Bergkamp, then thundered into position to head home the ensuing cross.

In the second half only a brave dive by Kasey Keller, Leicester City's American goalkeeper, prevented Adams from scoring a second. At other moments in the match Martin Keown and Steve Bould, Adams's fellow defenders, were just as eager to move upfield.

This was the Wenger revolution. Suddenly the dour days of George Graham were a mere memory. It was no longer relevant to chant "boring, boring Arsenal".

Not that it took Wenger, from Alsace, long to win the trust of his Arsenal players. Tall, bespectacled, professorial and precise, fresh from a lucrative job in Japan, veteran of seven mostly good seasons at AS Monaco, he seemed an unlikely figure in British football.

At London Colney, where Arsenal train, methods changed. Alan Smith, a former centre forward, observed that, whereas, under Graham, the players might spend 2½ hours on the field, 45 minutes of which might consist of a tactical talk, Wenger bases everything on brief exercises more acceptable to a player.

Ian Wright, the incumbent leader of the line, remarked that Arsenal were now doing things that the players had not even known about. Above all, Wenger, he said, did not behave like a sergeant-major but treated them like adults; and they, in turn, got good results because they wanted to please him.

Steve Bould admitted that he was not at all convinced that a different diet, massages and stretching could help him — "but I was quickly converted".

David Platt, a veteran of years in Italy, was amazed at how fast the players came round to Wenger's way of thinking. "Above all, he's been able to adapt his ideas to our style and character," he said.

If Wenger has an Achilles' heel, it is to be found in discipline, and the occasional tactical aberration. Arsenal this season have been by no means a consistent team. If they are now close to the top of the Premiership, it is largely by default. Time after time Arsenal players have been suspended and forced to miss vital games. Even Dennis Bergkamp, lauded by Wenger and seemingly a paragon of skill and sportsmanship, was sent off at Sunderland, while Wright has missed game after game.

Wenger does not stint in his praise of Wright. "As a goalscorer, it is difficult to find better," he said. "Since I was a manager, I have never seen such a goalscorer." Yet Wenger it was who took George Weah to Monaco!

Mutual admiration, though, has its nemesis. Those who know and respect Wright are aware of his shrewd approach to the game, but he can be his own worst enemy.

After his bitter confrontations at Highbury with Peter Schmeichel, the Manchester United goalkeeper, ended in a nasty confrontation as they left the field, Wenger said feebly that one could not know what went on in the players' tunnel. When Wright was sent off at Nottingham Forest, after running into Jerkan, Wenger insisted that the contact was trivial and that Jerkan had exaggerated.

When John Hartson, now at West Ham United, was sent off after abusing the referee on New Year's Day in the match against Middlesbrough, Wenger said: "What should be punished the most is what goes against the spirit of the game and not only the player who speaks to the referee."

Under Wenger, also, Arsenal have still to find a midfield playmaker, still to make real use of the wings. He has persevered with a waning Platt, who is only now showing belated signs of form. Wenger made strange tactical decisions in the vital game lost against Liverpool, eventually putting Paul Shaw, a reserve centre forward, on in midfield, where he wandered around, bewildered.

Wenger, however, has dealt delicately with Adams, a confessed alcoholic, and Paul Merson, who has had his problems with drinks, drugs and gambling. He has initiated a policy of tempting young talent from abroad: Nicolas Anelka, snatched from under the noses of Paris Saint-Germain; Giuseppe Motta, 17, a striker, taken from Juventus.

He will not, he says, be stampeded into bidding huge sums of money for the likes of Roberto Baggio, from AC Milan, though the feeling in Italy, it seems, is that Weah could find his way to Highbury.

Arsenal may be building for the future. However, victory at Highbury this afternoon, and an appropriate result from Anfield, would ensure that the next few weeks are not without interest, either.

RUGBY LEAGUE

Briers makes quick return to St Helens

By Christopher Irvine

WARRINGTON WOLVES yesterday signed Lee Briers, 18, the highly-rated scrum half, from St Helens for £60,000. Briers gets an immediate chance to make St Helens regret the decision tomorrow when Warrington visit Knowsley Road in the Stones Super League, although he will start the match on the bench.

Briers replaced Bobbie Goulding during his six-match suspension and scored a try and 25 goals in a series of effective performances. However, he found himself out of the side once Goulding, the Great Britain scrum half, was available again.

Briers, unhappy at the role of understudy, has signed a four-year contract at Warrington. "Lee is a tremendous prospect," Alex Murphy, the Warrington football manager, said. "He is also a top goal kicker and it's a marvellous signing for us."

The impressive goalkicking of Briers resolves another problem for Warrington, who have bounced back from a poor start with three successive wins. "It was a big decision to leave my home town club, but a first team place was blocked by Bobbie Goulding," Briers said. "I was disappointed not to be kept on the bench when Bobbie returned. It won't bother me returning to Saints for my debut. In fact, there's no better place to make my first appearance."

Henry Paul will take no part in Wigan Warriors' home match against Oldham Bears, and a lower back problem has forced him to withdraw from the New Zealand side for the international against Australia in Sydney next Friday. Paul, whose younger brother, Robbie, of Bradford Bulls, is on the New Zealand bench, was to have played at full back. Richie Barnett is moved from the wing and Daryl Halligan comes into the side.

Castleford attempt to win for the first time this season when they meet Halifax Blue Sox at home in their last match before the arrival of Stuart Raper, their new Australian coach. Even though it was their seventh successive league defeat, there were a few encouraging signs in the match at Leeds on Tuesday.

Wigan's interest in Paul Rowley, the Halifax hooker, has cooled for the time being. Halifax want £300,000 for him, but Rowley will be a free agent once his contract expires at the end of the season, when Wigan could make another move.

Sheffield Eagles entertain Leeds tomorrow after the announcement, yesterday, of the club's share price and proposed flotation on the Alternative Investment Market. The offer will raise an estimated £750,000 and is for 2,250,000 ordinary shares at 40 pence. The minimum application is for 1,000 shares, at a cost of £400, and the closing date for applications is May 12.

Other Super League clubs will be watching with interest once dealings in Sheffield start on May 21. The market value of the club is put at £3.9 million. The prime mover in the flotation is Paul Thompson, the new chairman, who now controls two thirds of existing shares.

Hamilton recruits from third division

IAIN JENKINS, the Chester City defender, has been called up by Northern Ireland for their group nine World Cup qualifying match against Armenia in Yerevan on April 30 (Russell Kempson writes). Bryan Hamilton, the Northern Ireland manager, was impressed by Jenkins's display in the victory over Portugal in a B international match in Belfast last month.

Though Hamilton rarely drops into the Nationwide League third division to embellish his squad, he has no worries about including Jenkins. "Iain is an ideal player to cover any emergencies that might crop up on a long trip abroad," Hamilton said. "He's equally adept on both flanks at full back, is capable in central defence and can tackle a midfield role as well."

Nigel Worthington, the central defender, will miss the tie after dislocating a shoulder during training yesterday.

NORTHERN IRELAND SQUAD: T Wright (Manchester City), A Fettis (Nottingham Forest), D Patterson (Luton Town), C Hill (Leicester City), I Nolan (Sheffield Wednesday), G Taggart (Bolton Wanderers), K Horlock (Manchester City), I Jenkins (Chester City), S Lomas (West Ham United), N Lennon (Leicester City), J McCarthy (Port Vale), G McMahon (Stoke City), J Magilton (Southampton), S Morrow (Queens Park Rangers), I Dowie (West Ham United), M Hughes (West Ham United), D Griffin (St Johnstone), P Mulryne (Manchester United), J Quinn (Blackpool)

Peace breaks out at embattled Brighton

By Russell Kempson

BRIGHTON may be drifting among the dead wood of the Nationwide League third division, and could yet drop into the Vauxhall Conference at the end of the season, but their long-term future as a club appeared to be resolved yesterday. After months of haggling between Bill Archer, the owner, and Dick Knight, the would-be owner, a settlement has been reached.

Archer and Knight held discussions last month, with the Centre for Dispute Resolution mediating, and it was announced that an outline agreement had been reached. Only the finer details needed to be ironed out and, yesterday, the Football Association revealed that the saga was nearing an apparently amicable conclusion.

In a statement, the FA said: "The parties to the mediation announced on March 12 that agreement in principle had been reached, with details to follow. Following a meeting at Lancaster Gate between Graham Kelly (the FA chief executive) and those parties, it can be announced that details of the agreement will be given at a news conference on Tuesday."

Archer and David Bellotti, the club's chief executive, have been vilified persistently by Brighton supporters, who accused them of hastening the demise of the club by deciding to sell the ground. Brighton have to leave the Goldstone at the end of the season.

The supporters' frustration spilled over at numerous public protests, including a pitch invasion during the game against Cambridge United on October 12. It led to the club having two points deducted, which has further hindered their fight to stave off relegation into the Conference.

Vinnie Jones, the Wales and Wimbledon player, is to sue his club and the FA Premier League. He wants to take them to court because Wimbledon are threatening to withhold his playing registration when his contract expires at the end of the season.

Under present rules, Wimbledon would be entitled to a transfer fee should Jones move to another English club. If the clubs could not agree, it would go to a tribunal. However, Jones is pushing for the Bosman ruling to be extended to domestic transfers, by which players could move freely between clubs.

Bernard Lama, the France and Paris Saint-Germain goalkeeper, is facing a two-month suspension after the French Football Federation announced yesterday that a second test on a sample given by the player in February had confirmed traces of cannabis.

ICE HOCKEY

Britain throw away two-goal advantage

GREAT Britain took their points total to five from five games in pool B of the world championships in Katowice, Poland, yesterday, drawing 2-2 with Austria after leading 2-0 well into the second period.

Britain had to make a late change of netminder, Stephen Foster taking over from Bill Morrison, who was injured in the warm-up. There were few scoring chances in the first period, but Kevin Conway put Britain ahead in the tenth minute and 14 minutes later Doug McEwen skated in alone on the Austrian net to make it 2-0.

However, Herbert Hohenberger opened Austria's account after 28 minutes when he beat Foster only 12 seconds after returning to the ice from the penalty box.

Six minutes into the final period Nicky Chinn was given a five-minute-plus-game penalty for cross-checking an opponent to the ice. Although the five minutes were successfully survived, Shannon Hope was unable to prevent Martin Ulrich from scoring the equaliser five minutes from time.

Even then Neil Morgan had one last chance to steal both points, but shot straight at the Austria netminder when clear in the final minute.

FOR THE RECORD

BASEBALL

NATIONAL LEAGUE: Florida 2 St Louis 1; Pittsburgh 3 Cincinnati 2. Postponed: Philadelphia v Montreal.
AMERICAN LEAGUE: Toronto 5 Oakland 4, Seattle 8 Detroit 6; Minnesota 4 Anaheim 3 (10inns); Milwaukee 5 NY Yankees 4; Cleveland 4 Boston 3; Baltimore 1 Chicago White Sox 0; Texas 5 Kansas City 1

BASKETBALL

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (NBA): Seattle 108 Denver 104; Utah 106 Golden State 93; Portland 105 Vancouver 73; LA Lakers 108 Sacramento 99

BOWLS

LLANELLI: Women's world indoor singles championship: Section A: S Hazell (Eng) bt K Horman (Jersey) 7-6, 7-5; A Sutherland (Wales) bt P Nolan (Ire) 7-0, 7-6. Section B: M Castle (NZ) bt J Lowery (Jersey) 7-1, 4-7, 7-5; C McAllister (Scot) bt M Wilkinson (Ire) 7-4, 6-7, 7-5. Section C: N Shaw (Eng) bt R Forrest (Can) 7-1, 4-7, 7-0; E McGarvie (Scot) bt A Simon (Guernsey) 7-4, 6-7, 7-2. Section D: J Roylance (Eng) bt A Memen (Guernsey) 7-6, 7-0; Lei Suk Man (Hong Kong) bt L Evans (Wales) 7-4, 5-7, 7-4.

CURLING

BERNE, Switzerland: World championships: Men: Australia 8 Switzerland 7, Norway 4 Scotland 5, Denmark 8 United States 9; Sweden 8 Finland 7; Canada 8 Germany 7; Scotland 7 United States 6; Finland 7 Switzerland 9; Norway 6 Canada 11, Denmark 6 Germany 7, Australia 5 Sweden 7. Final series positions: 1 equal, Canada and Scotland 7pts; 3 equal, Germany and Sweden; 5, Denmark 5; 6, United States 4; 7 equal, Norway, Australia and Switzerland 3; 10, Finland 1 Women: United States 6 Japan 9; Norway 9 Germany 1; Canada 12 Sweden 4; Finland 3 Switzerland 11; Scotland 1 Denmark 8; Canada 9 Denmark 3; United States 10 Finland 2; Norway 8 Scotland 5; Germany 10 Sweden 7; Japan 10 Switzerland 6 Final series positions: 1, Canada 8pts; 2, Norway 7; 3, Japan 6; 4 equal, Sweden and Denmark 5; 6 equal, Germany and United States 4, 8 equal, Finland, Scotland and Switzerland 2

FOOTBALL

UNIBOND LEAGUE: First division: Ashton United 4 Gretna 2.
ICIS LEAGUE: Premier division: Dagenham and Redbridge 1 Hitchin 1. Second division: Collier Row and Romford 3 Chalfont St Peter 0; Wivenhoe 2 Banstead 5 Full Members' Cup: Semi-final: Yeading 2 Aylesbury 2 (aet; 2-2 after 90min).
WINSTONLEAD KENT LEAGUE: First division: Furness 2 Folkestone Invicta 0
PONTIN'S LEAGUE: Premier division: Bolton 0 Liverpool 3. First division: Leicester 3 Aston Villa 2. Second division: Stockport 2 Rotherham 0; Grimsby 3 Manchester City 2. Cup: Semi-final: Stoke 3 Walsall 2
UNIJET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE: First division: Oakwood 1 Saltdean 0; Shoreham 0 Wick 0.
FA YOUTH CUP: Semi-final, second leg: Blackburn 2 Crystal Palace 2 (Palace win 4-3 on agg).
SCHOOLS MATCHES: English Schools Snickers Under-19 Trophy: Semi-final: Cardinal Newman, Preston 2 St Cuthbert's, Newcastle 1. English Goodyear Under-16 Trophy: Semi-final replay: William Parker, Sussex 1 St Joseph's Coll, Surrey 1 (aet, William Parker won 5-4 on pens).
FA WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE: National division: Doncaster 5 Tranmere 1: Wembley 0 Millwall 2.
FRENCH LEAGUE: Lille 1 Cannes 2
SPANISH LEAGUE: Oviedo 1 Racing Santander 5; Espanyol 0 Atlético Madrid 0.
DUTCH CUP: Semi-final: SC Heerenveen 5 Helmond Sport 0.

GOLF

HILTON HEAD ISLAND, South Carolina: Heritage Classic: Leading first-round scores (United States unless stated): 65: N Price (Zim) 66: T Lehman, R Fehr, B Faxon. 67: L Clements, H Sutton. 68: J Maginnes, J Leonard, P Mickelson, F Funk, T Watson, O Browne, C Stadler 69: W Glasson, S Stricker, J Wilson, J D Blake 70: S Appleby (Aus), J Sindelar, B Fabel, S Hoch, D Pooley, D A Weibring, D Love, N Henke, W Levi. British scores: 71: C Montgomerie. 74: N Faldo. 79: A Lyle.
MYRTLE BEACH: LPGA Susan Komen International: Leading first-round scores (United States unless stated): 65: N Bowen 66: N Harvey (Can), L Kiggens 68: S Steinhauer, L Davies (GB), T Barrett, A Sorenstam (Swe), M Hirase (Japan), L Hackney (GB). 69: M Will-Halpin, P Sheehan, M McGann, C Johnston-Forbes, C Figg-Currier, H Drew, B Burton, C Hj Koch (Swe), H Alfredsson (Swe), T Faucette Other European scores: 70: C Sorenstam (Swe) 72: P Wright (GB), H Dobson (GB) 73: L Neumann (Swe), C Matthew (GB). 74: S Strudwick (GB). 75: S Maynor (GB). E Dahllof (Swe). 78: K Davies (GB)
WEST HILL: Father and son foursomes: Quarter-finals: D H and M Baxter (Holme Hall/Hirst Priory) bt D H and C Ramsay (Berkhamsted) at 19th; M and R Taggart (Wildernesse) bt J and A Baldwin (Tandridge/East Berks) 5 and 4; T W G and R Betts (Mannings Heath) bt R W and I Attoe (Worplesdon) 2 holes. G L and G Bradbury (Burhill) bt A C and J Stapleton (Gerrards Cross) 3 and 2. Semi-finals: Baxter and Baxter bt Taggart and Taggart at 19th: Betts and Betts bt Bradbury and Bradbury at 19th. Final: Baxter and Baxter bt Betts and Betts 1 up.

ICE HOCKEY

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NHL): Stanley Cup play-offs: New Jersey 5 Montreal 2, Buffalo 3 Ottawa 1. Philadelphia 5 Pittsburgh 1. Florida 3 New York Rangers 0

SPEEDWAY

ELITE LEAGUE: Ipswich 57 Wolverhampton 33.
PREMIER LEAGUE CUP: Sheffield 60 Berwick 30.

SQUASH

BORDEAUX: Mutualité Française Tour Final: Second round: Jansher Khan (Pak) bt P Johnson (Eng) 15-7, 15-12, 15-7, Zubair Jahan (Pak) bt A Fahy (Egypt) 15-10, 17-15, 15-11; B Martin (Aus) bt S Meads (Eng) 15-9, 15-10, 15-10; D Jenson (Aus) bt J Bonetat (Fr) 15-10, 17-16, 10-15, 15-10; A Hill (Aus) bt J Nicolle (Eng) 15-1, 15-9, 15-7 S Park (Eng) bt J Davis (Eng) 15-10, 15-7, 15-7; C van der Wath (SA) bt A Hands (Eng) 12-15, 14-15, 15-11, 15-11, 15-7; R Eyles (Aus) bt S Galifi (Fr) 15-4, 15-6, 16-17, 15-14

SWIMMING

GOTHENBURG, Sweden: World short-course championships: Finals: Thursday: Men: 200m freestyle: 1, G Borges (Br) 1min 45.45sec, 2, T Bray (NZ) 1 45.81; 3, L Conrad (Ger) 1:46 44, 6, A Clayton (GB) 1 47.71. B final: 4, M Stevens (GB) 1 48 45 400m individual medley: 1, M Dunn (Aus) 4:06.89; 2, Xie Xufeng (China) 4.12 50, 3 equal, C Keller (Ger) and R Kamaugh (US) 4:12 53 4 x 100m medley relay: 1, Australia (A Radley, P Rogers, G Huegill, M Klim) 3.30 66 (world record); 2, Russia (V Selkov, S Lopchov, D Pankratov, R Egorov) 3 32 56 (European record), 3, Great Britain (M Harris, R Maden, J Hickman, M Foster) 3 32.81 (British record) Women: 100m freestyle: 1, J Thompson (US) 53 46sec, 2, S Völker (Ger) 53.50; 3, Le Jingyi (China) 53 72; 6, S Rolph (GB) 54 43 B final: 7, C Huddart (GB) 56.19 200m butterfly: 1, Liu Limin (China) 2min 07.20sec, 2, H Kashima (Japan) 2:07 34, 3, M Hyman (US) 2 07 54 B final: 3, M Pedder (GB) 2:11 35 400m individual medley: 1, E Johnson (Aus) 4:35 18; 2, S Herbst (Ger) 4:36 02, 3, J Maier (Can) 4:37 46 4 x 200m freestyle relay: 1, China (Wang Luna, Nian Yin, Chen Yan, Shan Ying) 7:51 92 (world record), 2, Sweden (J Sjoberg, J Lillhage, L Johncke, M Nilsson) 7 56 04, 3, Australia (J Greville, N Bowron, L Mackie, E Johnson) 7 56 12 (Commonwealth record), 5, Great Britain (C Huddart, V Horner, K Hawcroft, K Pickering) 7 59 18 (British record) Yesterday: Men: 100m breaststroke: 1, P Isaksson (Swe) 59 99sec; 2, S Lopukhov (Russ) 1min 00 05sec; 3, J Kruppa (Ger) 1:00 18, 4, R Maden (GB) 1:00 32 400m freestyle: 1, J Carstensen (Den) 3min 43 44sec, 2, C Cervin (US) 3 43 73, 3, G Hackett (Aus) 3:43 83, 4, P Palmer (GB) 3:43 90 (British record), 7, G Smith (GB) 3 51 56 4 x 200m freestyle relay: 1, Germany 7min 10 53sec, 2, Great Britain 7 11.13 3, Australia 7 12 33 Women: 50m freestyle: 1, S Volker (Ger) 24 70sec; 2, J Thompson (US) 24 78, 3, Le Jingyi (China) 24 83, 6, S Rolph (GB) 25 41 100m backstroke: 1, Lu Donghua (China) 59 94sec, 2, Völker 1min 00.10sec, 3, M Hyman (US) 1:00 49 200m breaststroke: 1, K Ellem (Aus) 2min 22 68sec; 2, L Lacusta (Rom) 2:25 60; 3, A Peczak (Pol) 2:25 62. B final: 8, J King (GB) 2.31 84

TABLE TENNIS

GLASGOW: Commonwealth championships: Teams: Men: Final: England bt India 4-1 (England names first: A Cooke bt A Dutta 21-19, 21-8, M Syed bt C Baboor 21-18, 21-16; A Perry bt A Basak 21-14, 21-16. Cooke and Perry lost to Baboor and Basak 21-23, 15-21, Cooke bt Baboor 21-13, 21-15). Women: Final. Singapore bt England 4-2 (Singapore names first. Pavy Fern Tan bt A Holt 23-21, 21-19; Jing Jun Hong bt L Lomas 21-18, 23-21 Li Ping Koh lost to N Deaton 18-21, 12-21. Jing and Tan bt Lomas and Holt 14-21, 21-11, 21-12; Tan lost to Lomas 12-21, 26-24, 8-21, Jing bt Deaton 21-10, 21-10). Doubles: Quarter-finals: Men: A Cooke and B Billington (Eng) bt Jun Hui Liu and Tian Syh Eng (Malaysia) 22-20, 21-13; S Laugesen and P Jackson (NZ) bt Yew Fai Son and Chin Guan Koh (Sing) 6-21, 21-17, 21-14; S Jenkins and S Ward (Wales) bt Hao Tao Geng and F Trudel (Can) 21-19, 21-19, C Baboor and S Raman (India) bt P Preedeeban and K Liu (Can) 21-14, 21-18 Women: Jing Jun Hong and Jia Wei Li (Sing) bt S Hurry and E Walker (Scot) 21-19 21-17, Bee Sim Phua and Lee Wei Ben (Malaysia) bt H Lower and L Radford (Eng) 21-16, 21-12; B Daunton and N Williams (Wales) bt Miao Miao and S Zhou (Aus) 15-21, 24-22, 21-14, Li Ping Koh and Pavy Fern Tan (Sing) bt A Holt and N Deaton (Eng) 15-21, 21-15, 21-11

TENNIS

BARCELONA: Men's tournament: Quarter-finals: A Costa (Sp) bt C Pioline (Fr) 6-4, 6-2, C Moya (Sp) bt A Medvedev (Ukr) 6-4, 6-2; A Berasategui (Sp) bt F Meligeni (Br) 6-2 7-5

SWIMMING

British luck alters with relay bronze

From Craig Lord in Gothenburg

GREAT Britain's frustrations at seeing three of its swimmers finish fourth at the world short-course championships here last night ended when the national 4 x 200 metres freestyle relay touched out Germany for the bronze medal behind an Australia squad that set a world record of 7min 02.74sec.

Still reeling from a fourth place in the 400 metres freestyle, where he set a British record of 3min 43.90sec, Paul Palmer swam his second lifetime best of the day, 1min 46.77sec, to put the Britain squad among the best of Australia, Sweden and Germany.

Andrew Clayton and Mark Stevens fought hard to keep in contention before James Salter clocked a magnificent 1min 44.91sec from a rolling start to pip Germany at the post and set a British record of 7min 05.81sec, just outside the previous world record and some 14 seconds faster that the previous national record.

The relay was the second world record of the night after Claudia Poll, of Costa Rica, had swum one of the most remarkable times in recent years to retain the 200 metres freestyle title.

As they had in Atlanta last year when she won the Olympic 200 metres freestyle, Poll's emotions spilt out after she had clocked 1min 54.17sec, 1.25sec inside the mark that she set when winning the world short-course title in Rio de Janeiro in 1993.

Poll leapt from the pool before those who trailed her had had time to catch their breath, ran over to Francisco Rivas, her coach and mentor, and embraced him.

While she managed to time each of her eight lengths to perfection, turning as if on cue, Palmer, 22, found that the turns in the short-course pool — 25 metres as opposed to the 50 metres of an Olympic pool — came too quickly in the the 400 metres freestyle, upsetting his style.

"I just couldn't get into a proper rhythm; the turns came too soon," he said after finishing fourth in a race in which half a second split the top five, Jacob Carstensen, of Denmark, winning in 3min 43.44sec. Graeme Smith was seventh.

As the bronze medal-winner over 1,500 metres in Atlanta, Smith is among the favourites to win over that distance tomorrow, but the organisers seem bent on ensuring that his chances are seriously reduced.

While they have allowed Americans to enter the event with long-course times if they have not swum in a short-course pools, they will only accept as an entry time from Smith the short-course 15min 28sec that he clocked in December.

There were other frustrations for Britain yesterday. Palmer's was one of three fourth places for the national team. Adam Ruckwood swam a British record 1min 55.55sec in the 200 metres backstroke, but was just 0.4sec from the bronze medal. In the 100 metres breaststroke, Richard Maden also came close to a medal, finishing fourth in 1min 00.32sec, a lifetime best.

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CHANGING TIMES

SNOOKER 44
Hendry enters the Crucible with world at his feet

CRICKET 45
Butcher serves early warning with century

Liverpool's prolific forward is determined to send his 'scally' image to the wall

Fowler strikes up new Mersey beat

Oliver Holt meets the boy from the backstreets who grew up to become an Anfield hero

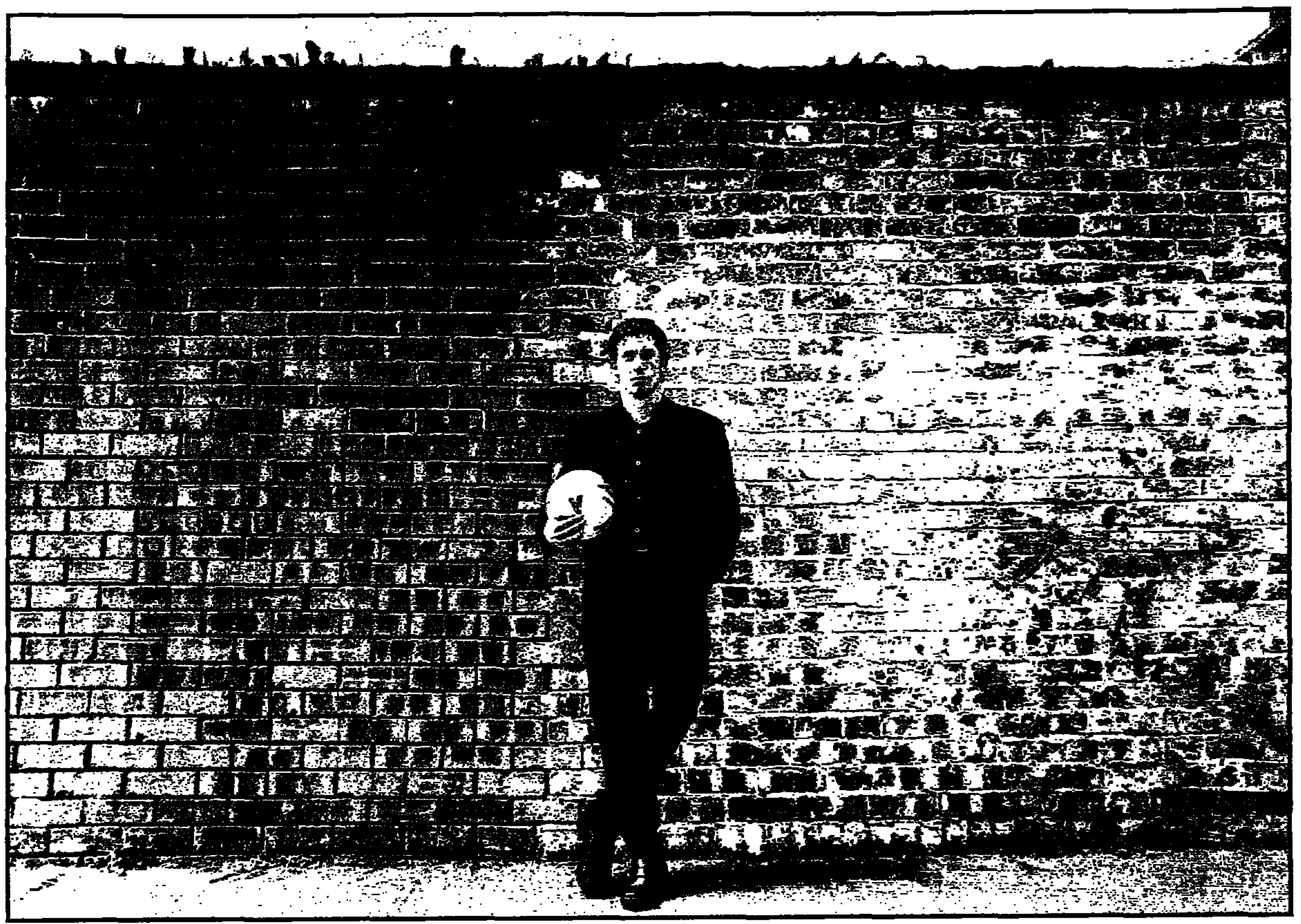
They had been told to be still, but the twin boys standing in front of their seats were craning their necks furiously towards the other side of the stand. Smart, in their new Diadora tops, they were finding it hard to be patient amid the solemnity. At last, one of them turned to his father with pleading in his voice. "Where's Fowler?" he said.

A few minutes later two figures walked onto the Anfield pitch, reduced almost to silhouettes against the clear blue sky. They wandered slowly towards the Anfield Road stand, disappeared for a while and then emerged at the side of the Kop. Dressed in sombre black suits, Robbie Fowler and Steve McManaman filed into their places and soon the ceremony began.

There is precious little to lift the soul at the annual memorial service for the victims of the Hillsborough tragedy save for the *passion and the dignity* of the bereft, but on Tuesday, on the eighth anniversary of the disaster, it was impossible not to be moved, too, by the devotion displayed towards Fowler and the feeling of regeneration that it engendered.

It was there in the mother who was standing a few rows farther down from the twins, hoisting a child so young into her arms that he would not have been able to read the name of the Liverpool striker printed on his shirt in huge capital letters with a large No 9 underneath it. It was there, too, in the crowds of children that gathered around his shining blue car after the service and pressed round him when he came out of the main entrance.

Fowler is a revered figure on *Merseyside*, the *successor* to talismanic figures such as Kevin Keegan, Kenny Dalglish and Ian Rush, and a better finisher than any of them. What is more, he is one of Liverpool's own, born and brought up in the tough suburb of Toxteth, a local lad who still lives in the city. His rise and rise is Merseyside's version of the American dream.



Boy in the black stuff: he wears designer clothes and drives an expensive car, but Fowler insists that success has not changed him. Photograph: Marc Aspland

Far from being the raucous, irresponsible Scouse lout many have branded him, Fowler is shy and intelligent, uncertain beside the self-assuredness of his closest friend on the team, McManaman. He is funny, too, full of self-deprecating humour, but happy that, at last, there seems to be some recognition that there is more to him than a prolific left foot.

There was a blip in the process of his creeping deification at Goodison Park on Wednesday night when he was shown the red card for fighting during Liverpool's draw with Everton — the first sending-off in his career. His season's finale will now come at Anfield this morning in the top-of-the-table clash with Manchester United at Anfield, with the eyes of the football world upon him.

There have even been suggestions that Fowler, 22, who has scored 30 goals for Liverpool again this season, was so important to the team that they were considering taking out an injunction to ensure that he played in the last three games of the season, which he is scheduled to miss through suspension. These claims were yesterday dismissed by the club, but if he can add to the four goals he scored against the FA Carling Premiership champions last season, then his disciplinary lapse will be quickly forgotten.

His image has changed irrevocably this season, anyway. Derided as a "scally" and typecast as a "football airhead", almost from the day that he burst into the Liverpool first team four years ago, he suddenly became a symbol of fair play after his attempts to persuade a referee not to award him a penalty last month. He has also been applauded by some MPs for his impromptu show of support for the sacked Liverpool dockers.

A few hours after the service on Tuesday, *Fowler sat in the sun*light on a bench outside a pub near Liverpool's training ground, sipping a glass of mineral water, occasionally acknowledging the raucous greetings of schoolgirls who called out to him from the top decks of passing buses. If his image had changed, he said, it was about time.

"Most of the time, when I do speak to the media," he said, "I am just labelled a scally and a ragamuffin. I might be a lot of things, but I have never, ever been a scally. The best way I could describe myself is normal. I do things anyone else would do. What Joe Public would do, I would do it.

"People have this idea that I had a really rough upbringing in Toxteth, but it wasn't really hard to stay out of trouble. When I was young we used to live in maisonettes and *I was part of a group of* about fifteen or twenty lads who knocked around there. All we used to do was play football in and around the maisonettes and build dens, the things you do at that age.

"I was never really one of those scally kids. I mean, you'd throw the occasional stone and have raids when other gangs would come over and you'd stand and throw stones at each other. I did that. I have got a scar over my eye where I got hit with a stone during a raid, but apart from that, I can't actually remember any other times when I've been in trouble.

> 'The best way I could describe myself is normal. I do things that anyone would do'

"I've still got the same mates and I don't think I've changed that much. I mean, obviously, I have moved. I've got a better car and I'm on more money and, because I'm a local lad, some of the lads where *I* used to live are jealous. They don't actually say anything, but I can tell by the way they look at me. It's not my fault, though. It's just something I'm good at and it's my living and at least I've gone out and done something with my life."

There are still some things he resents, of course. Fans drawing on his car while they wait for him to sign autographs as he leaves training is one thing, stories such as the one that said he had wrecked a hotel room when all he had done was broken a lamp are another.

Then there was the story about him and Neil Ruddock. "I was supposed to have had a big fight with him at the airport once," Fowler said, smiling. "But it wasn't like that at all. He just hit me and that was it."

Ferguson turns up title pressure

By Oliver Holt
Football Correspondent

ALEX FERGUSON, the Manchester United manager, staged another *tour de force* in psychological battery last night when he questioned Liverpool's ability to cope with the pressure of a championship dogfight on the eve of the meeting between the two teams at Anfield this morning that could decide the destination of the FA Carling Premiership title.

Ferguson was in jaunty, confident mood as he sauntered around The Cliff, United's training ground on the outskirts of Salford, revelling in the wealth of talent at his disposal now that so many players have returned from injury, shrugging off the lingering fitness doubts that surround Peter Schmeichel, Dennis Irwin, David May and Ryan Giggs.

Refreshed by United's good-humoured game against Celtic for Brian McClair's testimonial match on Tuesday and convinced that he can "trust" his own players to perform to their potential on the big occasion. Ferguson said that the present Liverpool side, who trail United by two points having played one game more, had yet to experience the pressures surrounding a close finish to the season.

Ferguson knows that the onus is on Liverpool, who have had to cope with the distractions of Robbie Fowler's dismissal against Everton on Wednesday and the poor run of recent form of David James, their goalkeeper, to win the game. If they lose, the championship will almost certainly go to Old Trafford again.

"We have got the experience of being there," Ferguson said. "When we get to this stage, nothing gets in our way. We know what we are after. It is something you have to go through. It is not easy. A lot of good players have left us without winning a championship medal and trying to win it can become an albatross. It can become too much for some players.

"I don't know much about the make-up of their players, but the atmosphere at Anfield tomorrow will be the type that could make people nervous. I trust my players to do their job. All our best performances this season, all our really classy performances, have come in the games where it has mattered most.

"I suppose it is the biggest head-to-head that we have had at this stage of the season with Liverpool, because they have not quite been in it for the past few years. Liverpool and Manchester United is always going to get the crowd up for it, but there is that added element that they have to win tomorrow. In the past, they have been able to relax when they were playing us because there was not as much at *stake, but this time it will be* different."

Ferguson insisted that Schmeichel, who injured his back during the preparations for United's European Cup quarter-final first leg against Borussia Dortmund in Germany ten days ago and was replaced by Raimond van der Gouw, would not play at Anfield unless he was fully fit. He said that, of the injured quartet, May was the most likely to make the team.

The United manager also dropped strong hints that Andy Cole, who played superbly in the club's 3-2 win away *to Blackburn Rovers* last Saturday, rather than Ole Gunnar Solskjaer would partner Eric Cantona in attack, although he refused to rule out the possibility of playing all three together. He *reserved his highest praise*, though, for Nicky Butt.

"Butt is coming back from injury when other people are starting to tire," Ferguson said, "and he is flying. He is playing like a man possessed, like a fresh player. It has been like buying a new player for the end of the season. You go through a spell when you have a lot of injuries, but, when you get to the end of the season, suddenly every one of them seems to be fit. We will be taking 22 players to Anfield tomorrow."

Premiership guide, page 46

THE RACE FOR THE PREMIERSHIP

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
MANCHESTER UNITED	33	19	9	5	66	38	66
LIVERPOOL	34	18	10	6	57	30	64
ARSENAL	34	18	9	7	57	28	63

MANCHESTER UNITED TO PLAY: Today: Liverpool (a). May 3: Leicester (a). May 6: Middlesbrough (h). May 8: Newcastle (h). May 11: West Ham (h)

LIVERPOOL TO PLAY: Today: Manchester Utd (h). May 3: Tottenham (h). May 6: Wimbledon (a). May 11: Sheffield Wednesday (a)

ARSENAL TO PLAY: Today: Blackburn (h). Monday: Coventry (a). May 3: Newcastle (h). May 11: Derby (a)

'The dour days were a mere memory. It was no longer relevant to chant boring, boring Arsenal'

Brian Glanville on Arsène Wenger, page 47

Reid sinks relegation fear

By Peter Ball and
Russell Kempson

PETER REID and Bryan Robson have been sparring, and drinking, partners for 20 years. Today, as managers of Sunderland and Middlesbrough, respectively, that friendship will be tested to the full as their teams meet at the Riverside Stadium. Relegation stares them in the face.

"Bryan and I go back to when we were kicking hell out of each *other for Bolton* and West Brom," Reid said, "but we'll still have a drink together." Predictably, both were optimistic yesterday, Reid insisting that both would survive to retain the North East's clutch of three clubs *in the* FA Carling Premiership.

"This is a massive, massive game, the league table tells you that," Reid said. "We're both in it, but we are both capable of getting out of it. Middlesbrough have not had the best of results from two big cup games, but that's when you find out the character of people."

With the FA Cup semi-final replay against Chesterfield at Hillsborough on Tuesday, Middlesbrough *may still not* be single-minded today, but Robson is looking for his team to recover from the bitter disappointment of losing the Coca-Cola Cup final replay against Leicester City — and the physical demands of having played two, two-hour games in five days.

"Of course there was disap*pointment over the Coca-Cola* Cup result," Robson said, "but it's gone. We can't dwell on that. If we get to Wembley again, and stay up, we'll have had a fantastic season."

Middlesbrough will be without Curtis Fleming and Mark Schwarzer, while Gianluca Festa, Juninho and Craig Hignett need late fitness tests. For Sunderland, Niall Quinn is expected to start for the first time since he damaged knee ligaments in September.

Southampton and Coventry City are engaged in a similarly important match at The Dell, with neither side willing to contemplate the ramifications of defeat. The form lines are good, though, with Southampton unbeaten in four matches and Coventry having won their past two.

Much will depend on the *availability of Matthew Le* Tissier, the Southampton and England midfield player, who missed his side's previous game — a 2-0 victory against West Ham United — with a hamstring injury. If he fails to recover, Michael Evans, the scorer of three goals in as many matches, will replace him.

Coventry are also waiting on a medical report, with Steve Ogrizovic, their goalkeeper, doubtful because of a thumb injury. John Filan, Ogrizovic's patient deputy, is standing by to make his first start since December 1995.

BOTTOM SIX

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Coventry	34	8	12	14	32	48	36
Southampton	34	8	10	16	45	53	34
West Ham	33	8	10	15	31	43	34
Sunderland	34	8	10	16	31	51	34
† Middlesbro	32	9	9	14	44	52	33
Nottm Forest	34	6	13	15	29	52	31

† Middlesbrough deducted three points

COVENTRY CITY: Today: v Southampton (a) April 21: v Arsenal (h) May 3: v Derby (h) May 11: v Tottenham (a).

SOUTHAMPTON: Today: v Coventry (a) Apr 22: v Sunderland (a). May 3: v Blackburn (h) May 11: v Aston Villa (a)

WEST HAM UNITED: Today: v Everton (h) Apr 23. v Leicester (a). May 3: v Sheffield Wednesday (h). May 6: v Newcastle (h) May 11: v Manchester United (a)

SUNDERLAND: Today: v Middlesbrough (a) Apr 22: v Southampton (h) May 3: v Everton (h) May 11: v Wimbledon (a)

MIDDLESBROUGH: Today: v Sunderland (h). Apr 24: v Tottenham (a). May 3: v Aston Villa (h) May 6: v Manchester United (a) May 8: v Blackburn (a) May 11: v Leeds (a).

NOTTINGHAM FOREST: Today: v Leeds (h) Apr 23: v Derby (a) May 3: v Wimbledon (h) May 11: v Newcastle (a)

M4

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weekend

'Can my boyfriend stay the night?'

home life · 13

SATURDAY APRIL 19 1997

ANDY WILLIAMS

Where commuter land and countryside meet: looking down on the splendour of Guildford's soaring cathedral, which "looks down in turn on a world where pay-and-display parking can seem like the alpha and omega of existence"

This genteel Utopia

Suburban dormitory or rural idyll? **Michael Bracewell** tours leafy avenues in search of the secret life of Surrey

Conquered in the name of God, gold and gardening, Surrey was a dream to recreate Eden that had to settle for Esher. But despite being regarded as the birthplace of the carport and the ornamental carriage lamp, from which generations of mild-mannered commuters have travelled up to London daily, returning to tend to their privet, Surrey is the most complex and surprising of the Home Counties.

It sits at roughly six to eight o'clock on the watch dial of Greater London, connecting the swish urbanity of west Thames suburbia to the rigorously defended rurality of its southernmost towns and villages, where the roads get smaller and the houses get bigger. But unlike hearty Hampshire or kindly Kent, with which it is flanked to the west and east respectively, Surrey, more than other Home counties, has evolved as an organic consequence of London proper. It is the capital's dormitory, filing cabinet and patio, yet largely distrustful of the city which it serves.

I was born in Surrey, and lived for nearly 35 years in the labyrinthine suburbs which spread from Merton to Epsom, encompassing in their residential drift most states of mind from the sylvan to the downright sinister. Surrey presents a collage of moods, and when I was asked by the BBC to make a film about the county, for its series *Travels With Pevsner*, in which six writers would reconsider six of the counties covered in Nikolaus Pevsner's *Guide to the Buildings of England* (1962), I found myself feeling more like a psychoanalyst than an amateur architectural historian. Borrowing a vintage Rover from a retired dentist in Canterbury, I set off to tour the county of my birth.

Above all, Surrey is the point of collision between two states of mind: the urban and the pastoral. As such, there is a deeply ambivalent relationship between Surrey and London, despite their constant intercourse. Like ill-suited lovers in a long-standing affair which has never quite settled into domesticity, Surrey and London are obsessed with each other's potential but incapable of sharing a bathroom, because Surrey is as connected to London by its function as it is distanced from London by its temperament. Thus it has become a laboratory for compromised notions of genteel Utopia, with its geographical position and its social agenda usually pulling in opposite directions. And in this conundrum must lie its identity.

When Richard Sheridan, the 18th-century playwright, acquired a house in Surrey at Polesden Lacey, near Dorking, he described it as "*The nicest place, within a prudent distance of Town, in England*". And the "prudent", really, said it all. In a single well-turned phrase, Sheridan had summarised the founding ethos of Surrey, which stated that the prettiness of its countryside — which was always shaped more by the domestic hand of man than the tempestuous forces of nature — was a fine retreat for those members of the moneyed middle classes who were fastened, as though by elastic, to the demands of life in London.

This was the beginnings of a form of commuting between the two states of mind which Surrey connected: the country was "convenient", and for those who could afford it there was the chance to enjoy the best of both worlds. Driving through the arc of pretty villages which run from Sutton to the hinterlands of Horsham in West Sussex, one can see that convenience has become as cherished as it is expensive. But no one (Sheridan seemed to imply) would actually want to live in Surrey all the time. This sentiment was echoed by E.M. Forster, that great anatomist of English suburbia who, somewhat unkindly, described the county as "a land of amenities, where success was indistinguishable from failure".

Ultimately, Pevsner would write the place off by comparing it to southern California, as a region "directed almost entirely to serving the needs of urban man". For this remark alone, Pevsner's name would be mud in Surrey for some years to come.

By that time, the county had become synonymous with infuriating moderation: its desire for convenience was derided as mere complacency, and its obsession with domestic property was regarded as a shallow triumph for personal and political conservatism. But the endless crescents and avenues of Surrey's deepest suburbia owe their striving for quaint rusticity to a stylised idea of the country's identity. This was the rural idyll with all mod cons, which was developed in Surrey at the turn of the century by the architect Sir Edwin Lutyens, who was born in what could justifiably be described as the epicentre of Surrey's regional sensibility, at the village of Thursley.

These days, Thursley possesses a fragrant exclusivity which makes driving through it almost as difficult as driving through the residential estates of Monte Carlo. And yet the illusion of democracy remains. Set amid rolling fields, with a gentle view of wooded escarpments, Thursley remains a near-perfect example of rural Surrey in complete accord with itself.

For Lutyens, the ancient Tudor farm buildings, with their vast, low roofs and lack of exterior ornament, must have hatched an ideal for Surrey living in which rustic simplicity could be tempered with genteel comfort. His famous houses in Surrey, from Munstead Wood to Orchards, delivered a style to Surrey's architecture which is repeated to this day, in a heavily mutated form, as the perfect marriage between pastoral serenity and bourgeois domesticity.

Rejecting both the grand gestures of the stately home and the call of modernist audacity, Lutyens had hit on the formula for Surrey's need to describe itself through its property. He had developed a paradoxical notion of radical moderation, combining the ancient and the modern in a way which resolved, right down to the last window fastening, Surrey's founding function as the collision between two states of mind.

This was a short-lived harmony between sense and sensibility, and Lutyens, in many ways, had lit the blue touch paper which would launch modern Surrey as a paean to pot-pourri and responsible parking. But the idyll couldn't last.

Throughout the 1920s, just when the literary world was reeling from the radical pessimism of T.S. Eliot's diagnosis of modernity *The Waste Land*, Surrey was expanding as a calm and leafy retreat for the equivalently expanding army of London's office workers. And with them came wealth and the politics of self-defence, painting the country bright blue. Repro thatch and proto-Thatcherism would become central to the image of the Surrey idyll. To this end, Surrey estate agencies could advertise the benefits of life in "Sunny Sutton" or "Rural Reigate", playing as much on the family man's fear of urban squalor as on his understandable desire to escape from the pressures of the working day by returning to a secure and comfortable environment, which suited both his income and his attitudes.

Here were the beginnings of Surrey as a colonised Eden for the new suburban classes, in which familiarity would be the keynote of its appeal. It was, in many ways, a chance to start afresh in the face of the 20th-century blues. Every feature of this developing Surrey, from the caves and gables of its "Tudorbethan" villas to the regularity of its commuter trains, seemed to promise not simply a home but a whole way of life. Existence itself could be managed on a suburban scale, with little need of conflict with the threatening world outside. Invading this safe environment with a film crew, one learnt at first hand of the almost invisible surveillance

Continued on page 2

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SERIOUS SHOPPING | THE PAIN OF PAYING

ROBERT CRAMPTON

I read in the newspaper that an American professor in Iowa is testing a new drug, fluvoxamine, that may be able to cure, or at least control, the addictions of shopaholics. The tone of the fluvoxamine article was predictable. "Husbands of those who shop in New York are begging doctors . . ." etc etc.

This assumption that all shopaholics are women relies upon, and reinforces, a stereotype. This stereotype holds that the average man bitterly resents most expenditure. Most stereotypes are wrong and pernicious. This one is, of course, entirely accurate. Many women I know must wish that an American professor could invent a drug which has the opposite effect to fluvoxamine — and then inject it into their shopaphobic partners.

I suppose there are *some* bits and pieces that I don't secretly resent paying for. The staples of life. Bread, for instance, I don't mind buying bread. Potatoes. Fruit. Some hardware goods, provided they represent a capital investment, like a new sieve, or a nice Phillips screwdriver, they're OK. Similarly, some durable items of stationery are fine, as are water, salt and breakfast cereal — so long as it isn't some faddish sugary stuff that tastes nice.

Subsistence shopping, in other words — that is my ideal. I do not come close to achieving this ideal, but it remains there in my mind as a sort of dream, a dream to which I hope one day all my shopping will be reduced, a dream against which I silently measure the actual shopping I do and have done on my behalf. Most men, I think, share this dream. Few of us live it. As Bruce Springsteen wrote on his shamefully underrated 1987 *Tunnel of Love* album, *When I look at myself I don't see/ the man I wanted to be/ Somewhere along the line I slipped off track*. As so often, Bruce is spot on. I feel like I've slipped off track every time I approach the checkout at Sainsbury's with another trolley-load of stuff I essentially disapprove of and feel I ought to live without.

Sainsbury's is one thing — other shops are another. On a scale of one to ten, if one indicates a mood of relaxed acceptance of whatever it is I have bought, and ten is boiling mad, then an average trip to Sainsbury's would rate about three. Four to six would be resentment rising through bitterness — most clothes shopping, for example, would register around here, unless I struck particularly lucky and chanced on something I wanted, or better still, needed.

Beyond a score of six, physical pain begins to take over from mere mental anguish. I experience paying for some things — cleaning materials, for instance — as a dull pain in the abdomen, spreading up to the chest and down to the lower intestine if large quantities are involved. A couple of bottles of Jif would be a mild ache. Jif plus some furniture shiny stuff would be more acute. Dettox spray brings on stabs of shooting pain that constrict my entire torso.

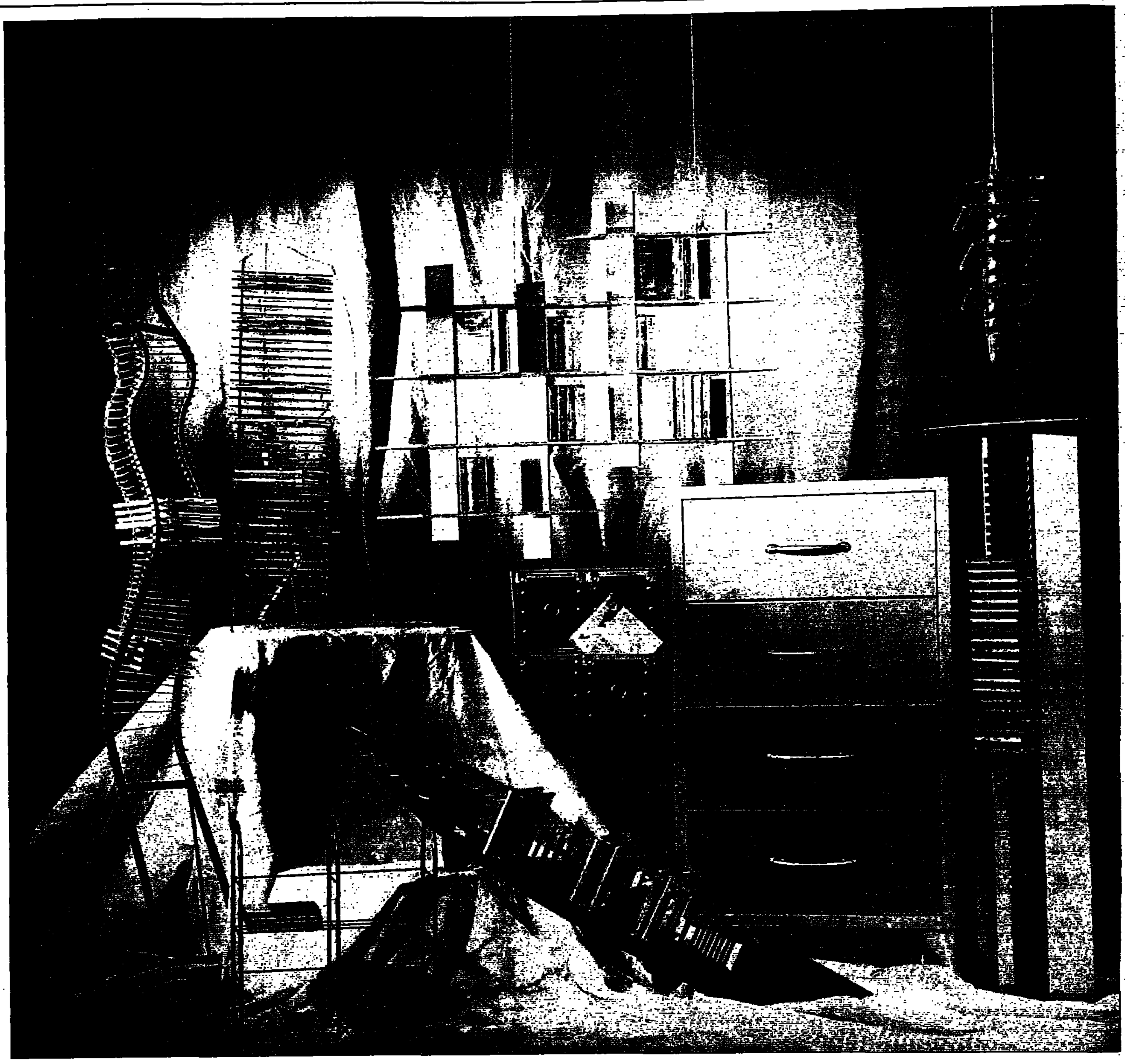
The worst symptoms are brought out by what I call Nothing shops, because they sell . . . nothing. These shops, which can count up to ten on the scale and never fall below eight, have proliferated in this decade. I say they sell nothing. In truth they sell: candles, small coloured boxes with bits of straw in them, sheets of wrapping paper, a few bits of jewellery (usually earrings, usually involving some metalwork around a bit of local foliage or flotsam), notelets, some lotions, other things that smell, painted pebbles and bits of rock, the odd pot and postcard, mobiles. Like I said: nothing.

Men, as a rule, cannot understand what it is that these shops sell. Women, as a rule, understand perfectly, because women buy presents for their friends and families. Women see beauty and utility in these shops, which must form a huge part of the British economy. The NHS is said to be the country's biggest employer, with about a million people in its pay. Nothing shops must be a close second. Think about it. Every town of any size in the country has at least one of these shops, usually employing at least four people. Large towns have several. Cities have dozens. London must have hundreds of them. There are certainly more Nothing shop owners and Nothing shop assistants in Britain now than there are coal miners, or teachers, or bus drivers.

I am surprised that people involved with the running of Nothing shops have not yet been identified by the political parties as a vital interest group. Over the next fortnight, they probably will be.

On the right track for a CD rack

IF YOU thought the CD tower was past its sell-by date, check out these de luxe designer variations. Where floor space is limited, opt for space-saving wall units and, for a clutter-free look, keep your music collection out of sight in a discreet, enclosed cabinet, says Sophie Chamier



Clockwise from left:

The Smiffy CD rack in mild steel and wire holds 50 single and five double CDs, £150, by mail order from J.O.E. Designs (0171-732 8190 or 0973 404678).

CD rack in hand-made glass by Jonathan Butler, £276, from Purves & Purves, 83 Tottenham Court Road, W1 (0171-580 8223).

"Interlok" CD/cassette storage system kits by *Artefice Design in MDF* (black, white, green and mango) from £24.50, or cherry wood from £49. For stockists and mail order (p&p free) call 0181-699 2756.

Aluminium CD rack to keep your top 12 CDs to hand, £42.95, from Heal's, 196 Tottenham Court Road, W1 (0171-626 1666) and branches.

"Sentinel" CD stack/hi-fi *stand, in hand-crafted in* maple, stainless steel, black-lacquered aluminium and MDF laminate, £279, from Studio 99, 81 Fairfax Road, NW6 (0171-624 8855) or direct from Paul Gower Furniture (01460 75959).

Sund CD cabinet in beech veneer with four metal drawers for 160 CDs, £83, or eight drawers for 320 CDs, £140 (also in black Melamine) from branches of Ikea (0181-208 5600).

Croc-o-dile CD rack, £69, holds 20 CDs and six doubles, from the Aero animal CD racks range in steel, including K-Nine dog £65, and Porc-u-pine £29, from Aero, 96 Westbourne Grove, W2 (0171-221 1950) or mail order (p&p £5) on 0181-871 4030.

Arched metal CD rack by Orbit Design, £34.95, from Jerry's Home Store, 163 Fulham Road, SW3 (0171-581 0909); Hampstead (0171-794 8622); Bentall's, Kingston, southwest London, (0181-549 5393); and Harvey Nichols, SW1 (0171-245 6251).

Centre:

Two-drawer fibreboard CD holders, £29, from London branches of Muji (0171-494 1197 shop and mail order), Covent Garden (0171-379 1331); Kensington (0171-376 2484); and King's Road (0171-352 7148).

Photograph by **Des Jenson**
Styling by **Caroline Griffiths**

'Price of freedom is the cost of a season ticket'

Continued from page 1

which functions in Surrey to maintain its sense of privacy and security. Any disturbance, however minor, is monitored. Hence, in the fiction of H.G. Wells, the consummate terror of aliens landing in Dorking.

With formidable speed, the development of Surrey's modern suburbia would keep pace with the expansion of the railway system. Indeed, Surrey and the railways have been locked in an uneasy relationship since the end of the 19th century, with the temper of the idyll being dependent on the tidiness of the timetable. There was even a special "death railway", which ran on the hour from Waterloo to provide the final commute to the London Necropolis Corporation's massive cemetery at Brookwood. Indeed, as Surrey became increasingly swallowed up by the sheer density of outer London's suburbia, the railways would mark the progress of its expansion as surely as they had in the pioneer West of America.

The railways would become both the symbol of Surrey's retreat from metropolitan life and the totem of its servitude to the routine of commuting. The price of suburban freedom might have been no more than the cost of a season ticket, but Surrey would turn the railways into the scapegoat for all that had been lost with its desire to put a distance between one's desk and one's des. res.

By the property boom of the 1980s, the estate agencies of Surrey would be playing down the necessity for commuting as much as their ancestors had extolled its benefits. Hence an advertisement for a Post-Modern estate near Banstead which claimed, with stretched plausibility, that living on Burgh Heath was like living in Chelsea. Even the most determined of yuppies couldn't fall for that one, any more than residents of deepest Essex would really accept that they were living in Docklands.

Despite being protected by a succession of Green Belts and Green Wedges, Surrey would swiftly find itself being turned away from the idyll of rural suburbia and made to face the frustrations attendant on modern commuting. And it was at this point, through the 1950s and 1960s, that Surrey would assume its popular comic function as the most likely setting for Tony Hancock's fictitious suburb of East Cheam, where the milk float of reality was always collecting the empties of romance. And this notion of Surrey as a self-parodic serfdom of long-suffering suburbanites, would be extended by *The Good Life*'s hilarious situation comedy of self-sufficiency in Surbiton, with Tom's Thoreauesque attempt to opt out of the rat race being played off against Margot's *nouveau riche* espousal of suburban snobbishness.

Importantly, Surrey had found its place in the index of modern Englishness as the reverse of its original promise. Where once it had been the county to which one escaped from the pace of London, now it was perceived to be a kind of domesticated prison, in which the stifling weight of its very familiarity could inspire comic acts of rebellion.

> 'A place of higher divorce rates and kinky brothels'

For this reason, perhaps, Surrey has bred or encouraged some leading outsiders. The suburban plateau was a launch pad of pop and Surrey had no shortage of rockets. Quentin Crisp, as the High Priest of Individualism, was born in Sutton, where his sister witnessed a child-molesting actor being held in handcuffs at the station.

Seventy years later, Jamie Reid and Malcolm McLaren would rehearse the outrage of punk rock at Croydon Art College, where Ray Davies of the Kinks had also been a student. And then there would be the morbid humour of Sheena MacKay's novel *Redhill Rococo* (1986), with its melancholy identification of Surrey's twilit position, stranded between two notions of glamour: "To the north of him was London, where no doubt people were passing the cocktail hour in dalliance and adventure and *crimes passionnels*, and to the south Brighton's palaces of pleasure glittered beside the sea... A departing diesel train hooted and left hanging in the air a floweret of smoke and a feeling of such desolation as it plunged towards Reigate, Betchworth, Deepdene and the green interior."

As a pressure cooker for disaffection, Surrey has produced the dubious distinction for providing one of the highest divorce rates in the country, and a reputation for kinky brothels. It has also opened its doors to Charismatic Christianity, with a penchant for muscular evangelism, which sits at odds with the countless Anglican churches that stand with Victorian sobriety on the edges of its towns and villages.

In this much, Surrey's deposed Edwardiana has finally given way to the IKEA school of apartment living. With the marble halls advanced consumerism, such as Sutton's St Nicholas Centre or Epsom's Ashley Centre providing mothership retailers to a new and more exacting generation of commuters, so the county continues its strange affair between regional independence and modern convenience.

Looking down from the Hog's Back dual carriageway, towards Guildford, one feels one is seeing the universe in miniature, expanding at light speed towards its inevitable implosion. Guildford's cathedral, soaring with opaque splendour through mist, looks down in turn on a world where pay-and-display parking can seem like the alpha and omega of existence. Reversing with supreme self-confidence into some extremely private rhododendrons, I had the sensation of committing an act of unintentional blasphemy.

● Travels with Pevsner *is broadcast on BBC2 at 6.15pm this evening. Michael Bracewell's new book*, England is Mine, *is published by HarperCollins on May 6 (£18).*

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NOVARTIS

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As the summer season of balls and evening bashes begins, **Heath Brown** explains how to combine elegance and glamour

Party lines

As summer approaches, many of us look forward to smart evening parties, university balls or perhaps a trip to Glyndebourne where dressing up is all part of the fun. However, these functions can become daunting when deciding what to wear.

Hordes of British women still opt for the "fairy on a Christmas tree" look, or for anything that sparkles with sequins and diamanté.

These styles can look wonderful but this glamour takes experience to wear successfully. You could end up looking uncomfortable and awkward.

The best bet is to choose something in a late 1920s style — long, lean and draping. These soft, generously cut column dresses in bias cuts are supremely fashionable and are flattering for most figures, because the fabric drapes and flows over the body. Floral prints can add an unusual twist for the lawns, and trains can add drama, but keep these strictly for the ballroom and not for the lawns of a garden party.

Thin strands of freshwater pearls, fine chain pendants or discreet diamanté flower necklaces are perfect accessories. Bags should be miniature, preferably satin, and shoes should be mid-height kitten heels. If there is a chill in the air, an evening wrap in satin with a fringe, a quilted stole or a devoré velvet rectangle will look stylish.

JEWELLERY (above, left to right): String of freshwater pearls, £325, and gold strand cornelian pendant necklace, £65, Manguette, 40 Gordan Place, Holland Street, W1 (0171-937 2897). Pink stone flower choker, £78, earrings, £16.50, Butler & Wilson, 20 South Molton Street, W1, 189 Fulham Road, SW3 (0171-409 2955)

All photographs by **Richard Burns.** Styling by **Amandip Uppal.** Hair and make-up by **Sarah Gottschalk** using Gianca Rossi Products (mail order, 0171-289 7485)

THREE OF A KIND

Tortoise-shell effect sunglasses look classy and expensive. The choices here don't have obvious branding and are simple in their design. H.B.

Jackie O tortoise-shell sunglasses, £12.99, Oasis branches nationwide (01865 881986)

Rivers Polaroid tortoise-shell wrap-around sunglasses, £30, Boots, major stores nationwide (0115-950 6111)

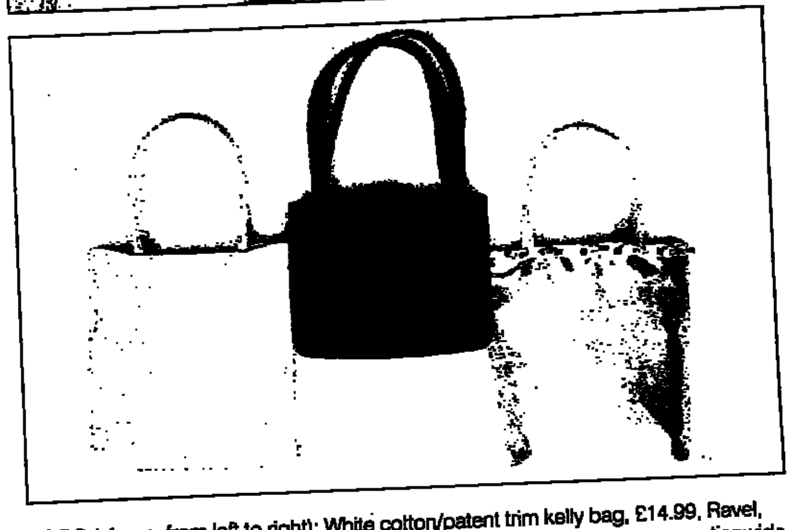
Round tortoise-shell sunglasses, £125, Giorgio Armani, 37 Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-235 6232)

RIGHT: Mauve satin back crepe fish-tail dress £1,495, Pearce Fionda Liberty,W1; Harrods, SW1; Cruise, 39-45 Wrenfield Street, Glasgow (0171-609 6470). Diamant/pink stone flower tiara, £148, Butler & Wilson, as before. Fine wire/cornelian and crystal choker, £65, Manguette, 40 Gordon Place, Holland Street, W1 (0171-937 2897). Lilac leather open-toe slingback shoes, £125, Russell & Bromley, selected branches nationwide

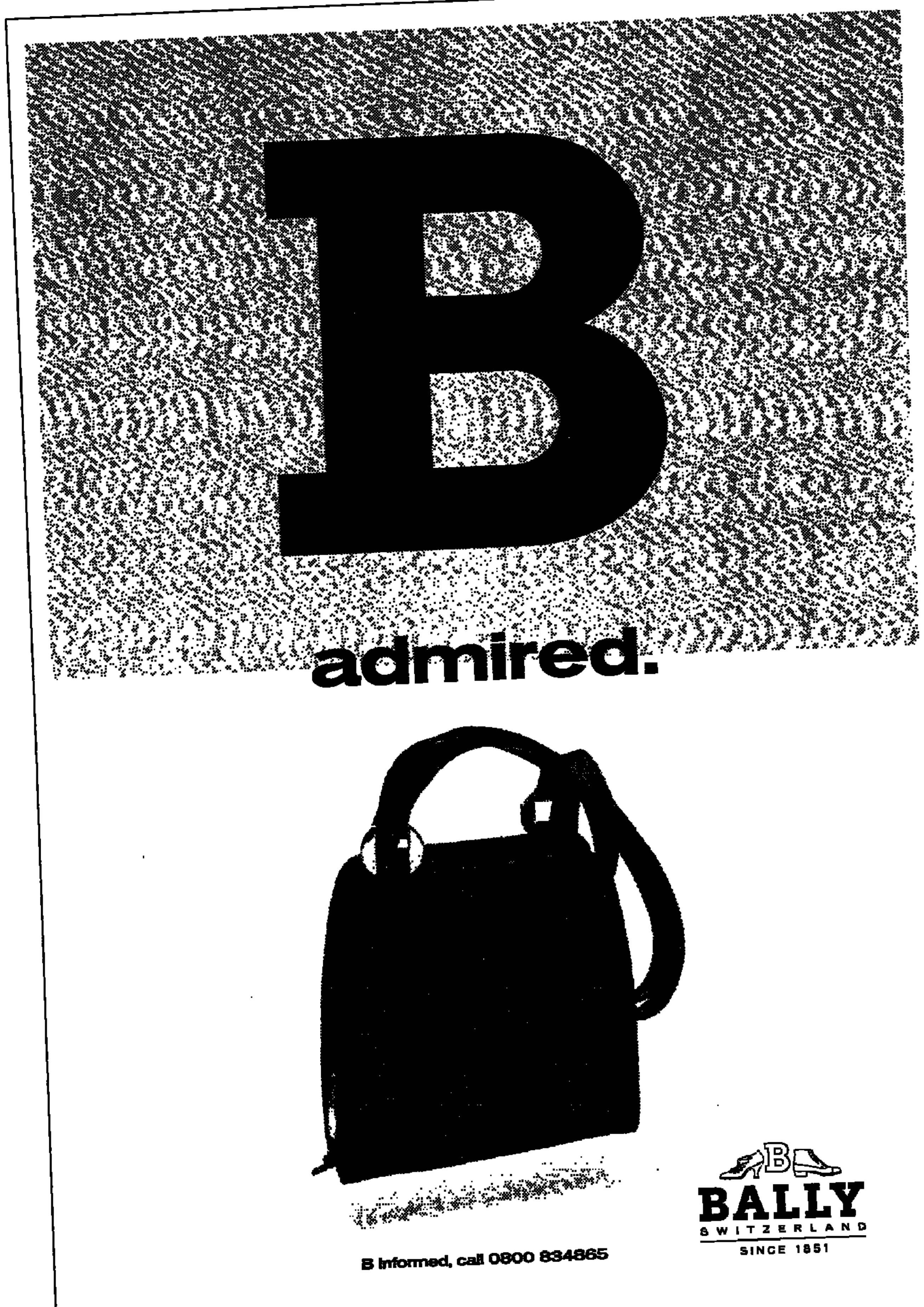
SHOES (above, from top): Lilac leather open-toe slingbacks £125, Russell & Bromley, selected branches (0171-629 6903). Blue snakeskin strappy shoes, £59.99, Ravel, selected branches nationwide (0171-631 0224). White patent open-toe sandals, £27.99, River Island, branches nationwide (0181-998 8822)

CENTRE: Pale blue floral chiffon fish tail dress, £715, Mana Grachvogel, Liberty, W1; Selfridges, W1 (0171-581 8180). Gold fringe shawl, £49.99, Gordana, Harrods, SW1 (0171-708 2538) Yellow stone flower choker, £78; matching earrings, £16.50, Butler & Wilson, 20 South Molton Street, W1; 189 Fulham Road, SW3 (0171-409 2955). Beige suede T-bar strap slingback shoes, from a selection, £185, Gina, 189 Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-235 2932)

LEFT: Ice-blue silk/devoré trim dress, £900, John Rocha, Harvey Nichols, SW1 (0171-235 5000); Liberty, W1 (0171-734 0123). Gold/red stone flower tiara, £98; matching earrings, £28, Butler & Wilson, as before



BAGS (above, from left to right): White cotton/patent trim kelly bag, £14.99, Ravel, as before. Black satin kelly bag, £12.99, A.C.O., major department stores nationwide (0171-631 1236). Peach satin flower trim bag (as part of set with dress), £165, Browns Focus, 38 South Molton Street, W1 (0171-491 7833)



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GARDEN ANSWERS

STEPHEN ANDERTON

replies to readers' letters

Q Can you suggest an attractive evergreen standard tree to grow in a pot on my shady patio, and which I can plant around seasonally? Something which also flowers please. — G. Marcus, Stanmore, Middlesex.

A The easiest evergreens to find as standards would be bay, or *Prunus lusitanica*, but there are no flowers to speak of, especially when clipped. It is the clipping or pruning to form a standard which would stop many things flowering, and the shade of course. However, you could use female hollies, for berry colour, if you have males elsewhere nearby. Why not make standards of *Viburnum tinus*, which flowers over such a long period in winter and early spring. You might even find it as standard in some of the bigger garden centres.

You would need to prune by pinching rather than clipping, and to ease off later in the summer so that potential flower buds are not removed. How about black and white pansies below for winter?

Q I am looking for some suitable plants to grow in a 100-year-old tapered chimney pot 3ft tall by 1ft wide. There is a hand-painted design on the top which I would like to keep visible to some extent. — D. Calland, London.

A Is it in shade or sun? I always think tall tapered pots look best with a "mob-cap" planting, to balance them. How about a good clump of fancy hostas in shade? Somewhere to stand a good potful of aspidistra or a big spider plant in summer? In sun I would be tempted, with that generous volume of soil, to try a sprawling rose. The new, disease-resistant 'Flower Carpet White' would do the trick, or mid-pink 'Surrey'. Or you could fill it with a mixture of trailing verbenas, helichrysum, and bidens.

Q We have a magnificent 14ft-high privet hedge which gives us vital privacy but it is 8ft thick at the top. We have managed to trim it with help from neighbours, but it is getting beyond us. How might we taper the hedge, to make clipping the top easier, and when should it be done? — S. Robinson, Seaford, East Sussex.

A If you get in there now with a saw, you can cut off your side of the hedge back to the trunk. But privet is not the best of plants for rethickening all the way up. If you find there are several trunks to each plant, cut right down to ground level the outside one or two, to make them sprout from the base. You can then grow a new face up the side of the hedge, without ever losing height. In a couple of years you should cut back the other side too.

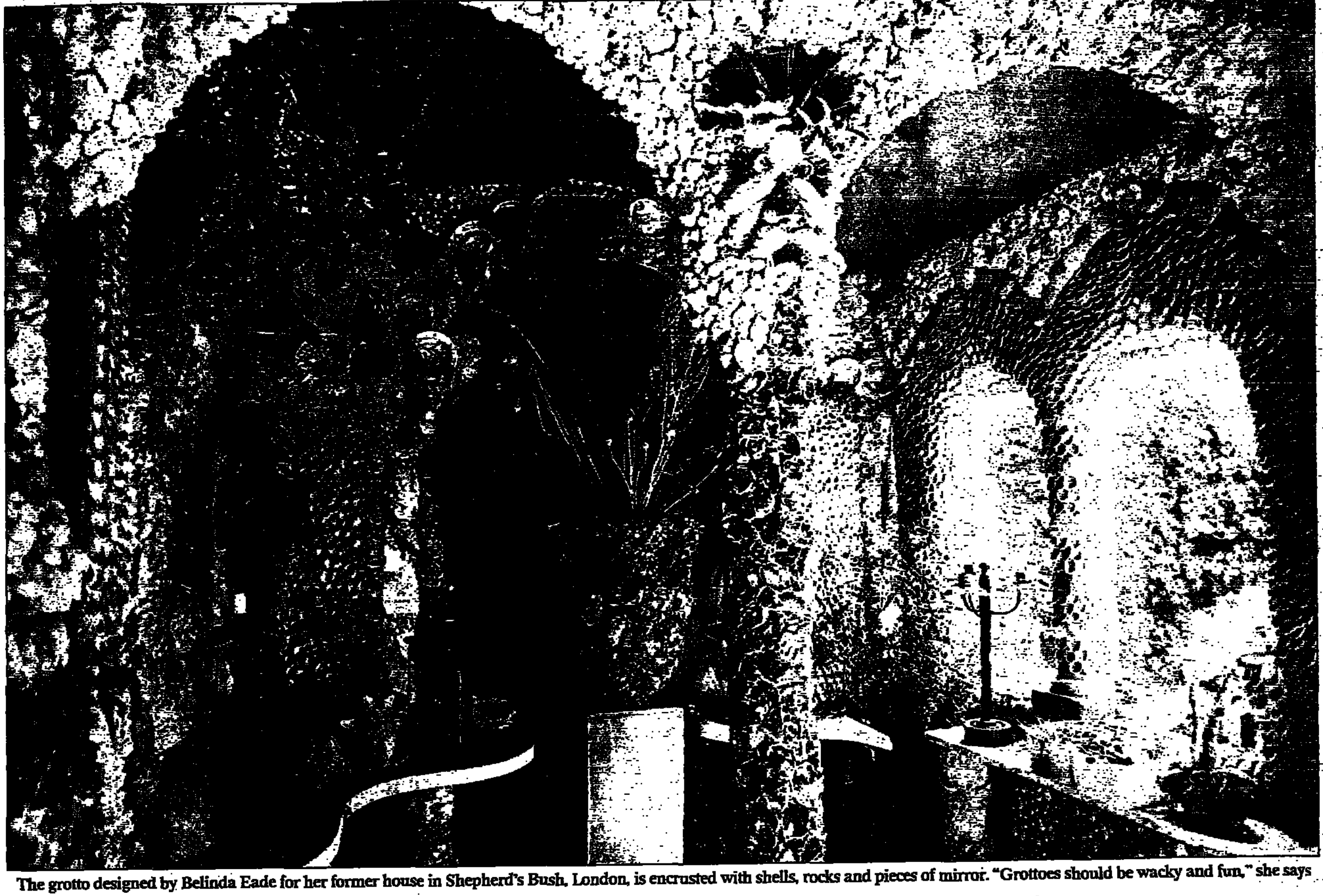
Q I have an aspidistra which I understand will stand anything and cannot be killed. I can kill it. It started with holes across the leaves, and now they are all brown. I have not overwatered it. Please help. — R. Lashbrook, Romford, Essex.

A This looks like an attack of vine weevil. I have not heard of vine weevils attacking aspidistra before, but I am not surprised. The best control for them is biological (a nematode), and is available, mail-order only, from Defenders on 01233 813121.

● *Write to Garden Answers, Weekend*, The Times, *1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. Advice is offered without legal responsibility.* The Times *regrets that any enclosures cannot be returned.*

Grottoes are making a comeback in gardens large and small, says **Jane Owen**

PICTURES



The grotto designed by Belinda Eade for her former house in Shepherd's Bush, London, is encrusted with shells, rocks and pieces of mirror. "Grottoes should be wacky and fun," she says

Underneath the arches

Belinda Eade: designer

The ultimate garden accessory during the Renaissance was a grotto. The ancient Greeks and the Romans had them, and some 15th-century Continental gardens could not be seen without them.

They were the upper-crust Disney entertainment of the time, with interiors that traced stories of classical antiquity using statues and mosaic-and-shell designs, or which made a thrilling contrast to the rest of the garden by providing a chamber of slime, chill and dankness.

Today Britain, which was gripped by its first grotto craze in the 18th century, is the crucible for a revival in grottoes. Belinda Eade, a former jeweller, took up the art when invited to join the team building a grotto at Leeds Castle in Kent (see below), designed by Vernon Gibberd, one of the modern masters who has just completed another grotto at Kelburn Castle in Ayrshire.

Traditionally, particularly in Britain, grottoes were purely ornamental garden buildings designed to be travelled past or through. But that is changing. Ms Eade's first solo grotto, built in the back garden of her previous house in Shepherd's Bush, London, became more of an outside room where she entertained friends or worked.

Instead of leaving her small backyard to fester damply, she built a remarkable garden room, encrusted with shells, rocks and pieces of mirror. Two curvaceous larger-than-life-size Native American-style women guard either side of the door into the main house and the vaulted ceiling is decorated with grotesque masks, all made from shells.

"I have built dank, mossy grottoes, but I like ones in which you can sit and admire them. Grottoes should change the mood of a garden — they should blow your head off with the change of atmosphere and they should also be wacky and fun.

"The people who bought my house liked my grotto, although I felt ambivalent about leaving it. But you have to move on. I am not going to start another one at my new place because I need to concentrate my energies on other projects," Ms Eade says.

She can sometimes be found touring the fashionable eateries of Notting Hill, west London, in search of mussel and oyster shells for her work. "I prefer English shells to exotic ones," she says.

She finds it difficult to give guide prices for her work because "It depends so much on the scale and the client. What matters is an enthusiastic client who enjoys fantasy".

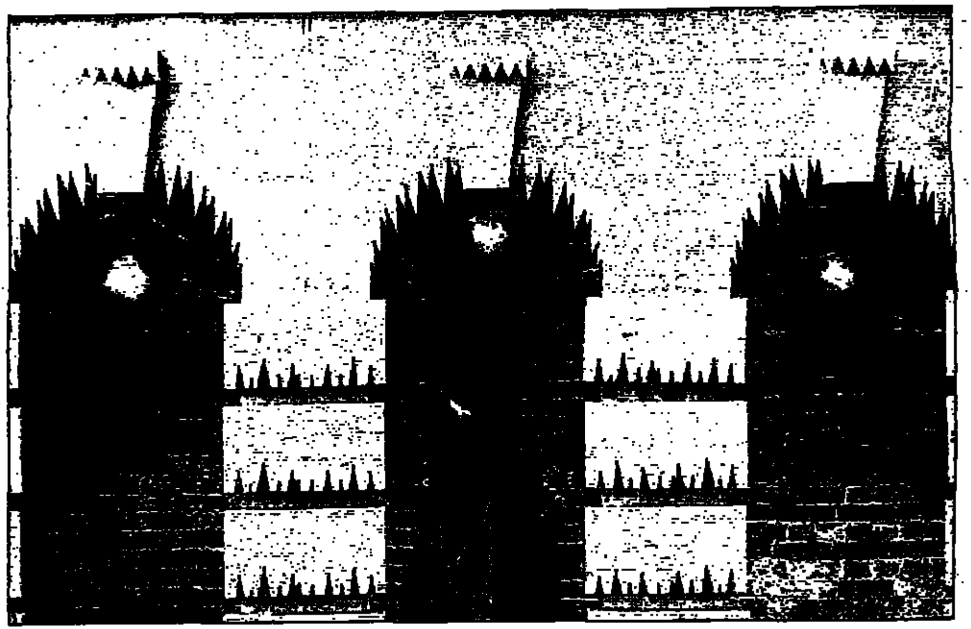
Another grotto enthusiast is the sculptor-turned-landscaper, George Carter, who built a grotto at the Chelsea Flower Show in 1985 from broken milk bottles, blue glass fragments, timber, lead and mirrors. The work brought in commissions from both sides of the Atlantic.

Mr Carter says he can design and make a grotto for as little as £1,500, but it would be made from plywood. If that doesn't sound promising, take a look at his work. His eye for perspective and scale make the dark green plywood structures into startling eyecatchers.

"Grottoes are ideal for basements in London, which are dark, sunless areas," he says. "But when they are created in gardens they intensify mood. They tend to be gloomy — an antidote to the cheerful parts of the garden, in rather the same way that informality can accentuate the formal parts of a garden. Grottoes tend to be symbolic of the underworld."

Mr Carter, who lives in Norfolk where flint is abundant, often works in stone and says he can design and make a small flint grotto for about £8,000. But he will work in most materials, and he has recently designed a mussel-shell grotto for the photographer Marianne Majerus's garden in Islington. It will be made of timber and shells and installed at the far end of the small town garden with a huge urn at its centre from which water will trickle into a pond below.

Surely, this is the grotto of the future — a massive landscape feature scaled down for city living.



George Carter (below), a sculptor-turned-landscaper, can make grottoes from plywood

> 'Grottoes intensify the mood of a garden. They symbolise the underworld'

FACT FILE

- Belinda Eade, Great Western Studios, Lost Goods Building, Great Western Road, London W2 5HZ.
- George Carter, Silverstone Farm, North Elmham, Norfolk NR20 5EX (01362 668130).
- Vernon Gibberd, 0171-351 6728.
- Leeds Castle gardens, Maidstone, Kent (01622 765400), J8 off M20. Open 10am-5pm.
- Kelburn Castle and Country Centre, Fairlie, Ayrshire (01475 568685).
- Stourhead Gardens Sourton, Wiltshire. (01747 840348).
- Painshill Park, Cobham, Surrey (01932 868113), J10 of the M25. Open 10.30am-4.30pm.
- Folly Fellowship, 0181-348 1234.

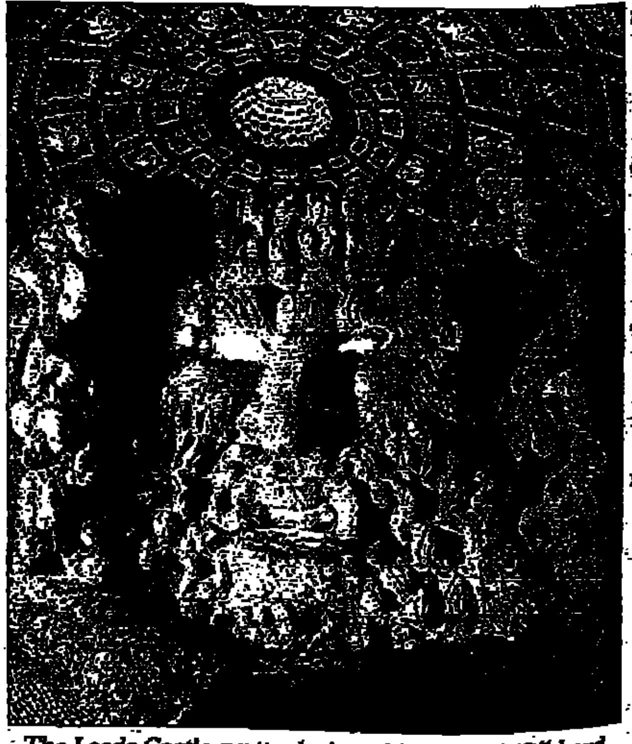
Leeds Castle folly with encounters of the divine kind

During the mid-Eighties work began on the Leeds Castle grotto. Simon Verity, the garden sculptor, and shell artist Diana Reynell did most of the decorative work, helped by Belinda Eade. This fantastic echo of the underworld is one of the first important grottoes to be built in this country since the 18th century when Henry Hoare commissioned his classic rock grotto at Stourhead in Wiltshire, and Charles Hamilton ordered a shimmering crystal-lined grotto with waterfalls and stalactites for his landscape at Painshill in Surrey.

The designer Vernon Gibberd had never designed a grotto before. He was hired by the trustees of Leeds Castle to make a maze, but as he worked out the Leeds Castle puzzle, he decided to put a mount at the centre. This evolved into a hollow mount into which visitors plunge down a stone spiral, to be met by the *massive mask of the god of the underworld Typhoeus, eyes lit* from behind and water gushing from his mouth.

The Leeds Castle trustees, who had asked only for a maze, were not impressed, and it was only after a certain amount of pressing that Mr Gibberd's scheme was reluctantly allowed to go ahead. Today the grotto is one of the castle's foremost attractions.

Mr Gibberd has built several grottoes since and has become the "Grotto Man" of the Folly Fellowship. "They couldn't think of another title for me, so this was a made-up one to include me in the Fellowship," says Mr Gibberd, who is building himself a grotto in the grounds of his Elizabethan farmhouse in Wales. The small brick and stone building will have a lookout post on the top and fireplace (decorated with a huge Medusa-like mask) so that Mr Gibberd can use his grotto "for reading or having a drink, even in winter".



The Leeds Castle grotto designed by Vernon Gibberd

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How genes ensure the pick of the crop

Genetic engineering can alter common flowers, make vegetables grow better and produce disease-resistance varieties, says **Stephen Anderton**

Away from the pressures of commercial agriculture and horticulture, gardeners might be forgiven for thinking that genetic engineering does not affect us. We would be wrong. The man who wants to prove this to us is Professor John Parker, the new director of the University Botanic Garden in Cambridge.

Genetics is the professor's passion and in his first year he intends to demonstrate the effects of genetic changes on familiar plants, such as antirrhinums. Alter a gene, and the antirrhinum flower structure changes remarkably. Alter a couple and you are well on the way to a buttercup.

At Cambridge, Professor Parker is running an ornamental garden as well as a research establishment. His aim is to demystify genetics for non-scientists and gardeners. "The difference between a cell becoming a cow or an antirrhinum is all a matter of genetics," he says, "and antirrhinums are a very good place to begin showing what genetics can do."

Genetics for gardeners is in its early days, but the John Innes Institute in Norwich has found the answer to making antirrhinums flower to the tip. In Wales, the Institute of Grassland and Environmental Research has identified a gene which makes stressed grass stay green longer. This naturally occurring phenomenon is likely to find its way into lawn grasses for drought areas. At laboratories in Britain, Germany, Holland and France, the EU is funding a research project to establish DNA fingerprinting of individual plant varieties, so that those varieties covered by Plant Breeders' Rights cannot be propagated illegally.

As ever, money and commerce are the spur to research. The amateur gardening market gains only in spin-offs from commercial agricultural research. But who is to say that in 20 years we will not be able to maintain the availability of historic plant varieties simply by recording the genetic fingerprint and recreating it when required?

The humble pea is a good example of genetics at work. It is curious that cultivated peas the world over are self-pollinating, and yet in the wild it still takes two to tangle. But there is a further natural mutation of peas in which some of the leaflets become simply tendrils instead. Genetics has identified the cause of this mutation, and this semi-leafless pea has become the staple of the East Anglian frozen-pea industry. Its extra tendrils make it self-supporting, and the lack of leaf reduces the volume of the haulm, making machine-picking more efficient. When natural mutation affects the gene in a different way, all the leaflets become tendrils, creating a really tangled plant which stands up even better. Such peas were marketed by the seed merchants Thompson & Morgan in the 1980s.

Semi-leafless peas have also been selected for their ability to reach ripeness all on the same day. Granted, there are more important things to home gardeners than self-supporting peas, and rather than simultaneous ripening we prefer successful cropping over a long season, but this is an excellent example of genetic modulation proving both useful and unthreatening.

Professor Parker says genetic engineering, especially in plants, is not the monster it is sometimes made out to be. "It is really only the speeding up, directing and using of a natural phenomenon.

"When a highly bred crop variety is hybridised with a closely related wild plant, to gain disease resistance, it then takes 10-15 years of back-crossing with high-yield varieties to reach anything like another commercially viable plant. By genetic means, this can be cut to five to ten years — useful if the world population is going to double by 2050."

The creating of a desired genetic pattern by plant selection as we used to know it — by back-crossing and selecting over many years — is called "vertical transmission". But when a gene slips out, producing a result which might have taken decades or more by vertical transmission, the short cut is called "horizontal transmission". It can happen naturally, as a result of viruses, or it can happen through genetic engineering.

If this sounds too powerful a toy for scientists, Professor Parker is rational about possible problems. "It is no use having a plant completely immune to a disease, or it lays itself open to new forms of the disease later," he says. "What we need are plants which can stand the pressure of a particular pathogen, such as mildew, but not succumb to it entirely, so that the plant can go on developing its own resistance to the changing disease."

Only research into genetics will allow scientists to understand what exactly genes do. But it is clear already that certain genes carry similar functions over a whole range of plants. And that some genes control the timing of the function of other genes. So, depending on such timing, a flower may develop to look more like a delphinium than an antirrhinum.

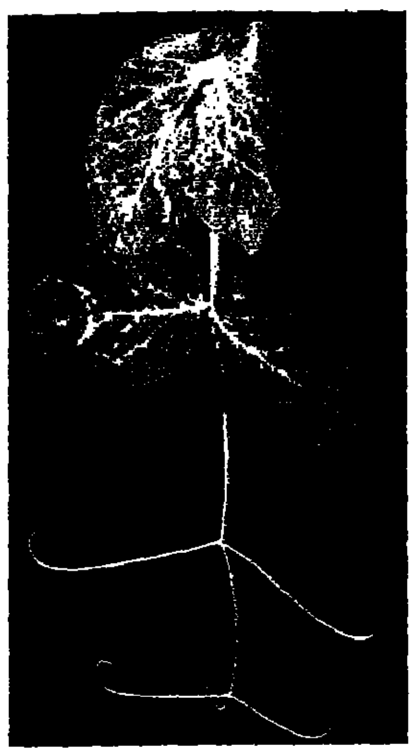
If genetic research could find a solution, for example, to eelworms in potatoes, which is a worldwide problem, it is a potentially much shorter road to using that knowledge to deal with the problem of eelworms in other ornamental garden plants.

● *Photos of antirrhinum and oilseed rape by John Innes Institute*

WEEKEND **TIPS**

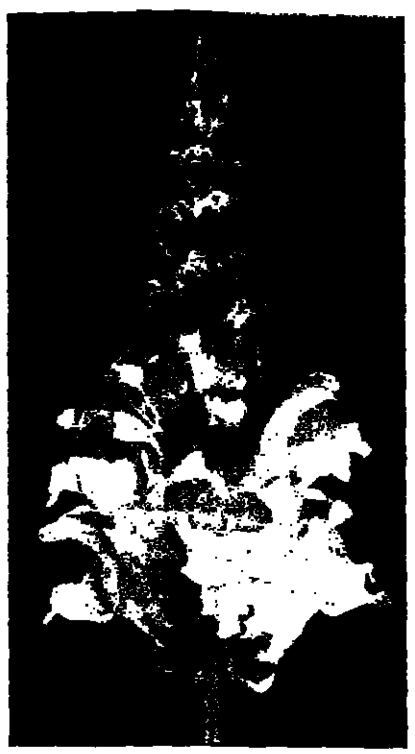
- ■ Plant onion sets, 6in apart each way, and pushed into the soil until just the tip shows. Sow courgettes, cucumbers and outdoor tomatoes under glass.
- ■ Complete pruning of evergreens, including any hard pruning of holly and yew hedges.
- ■ Lay new lawns, by turf or seed. Repair damaged lawn edges and redefine edges. Overseed thin lawns.
- ■ Spray fruit trees as necessary for scab and aphids, avoiding spraying when the flowers are open.
- ■ Early bedding plants should be given maximum fresh air in warm weather, by lifting them out into sunshine.

NORMAL PEA



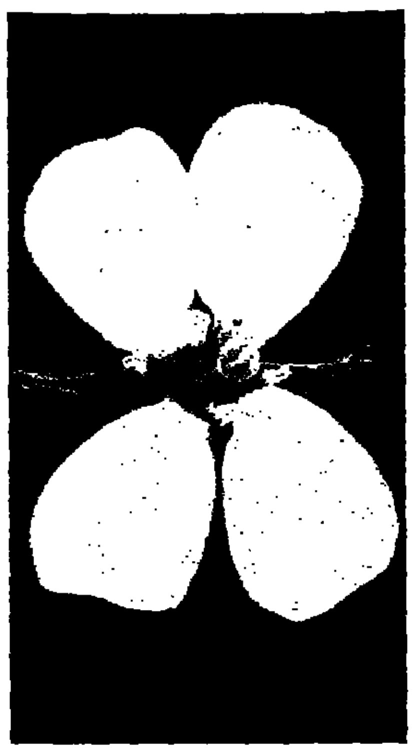
Pea with leaflets and tendrils

NORMAL ANTIRRHINUM



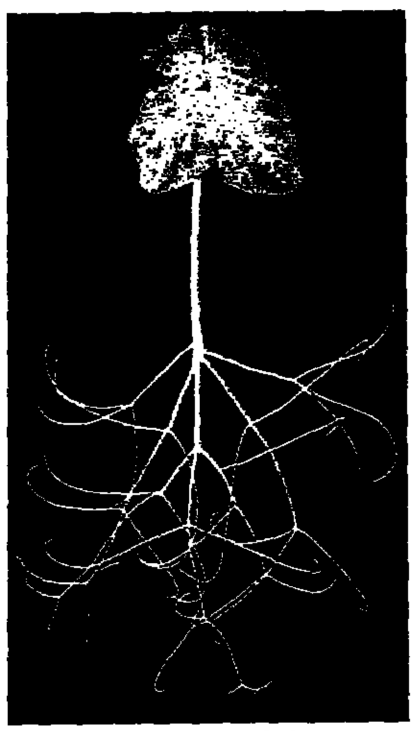
The familiar garden antirrhinum

NORMAL OILSEED RAPE



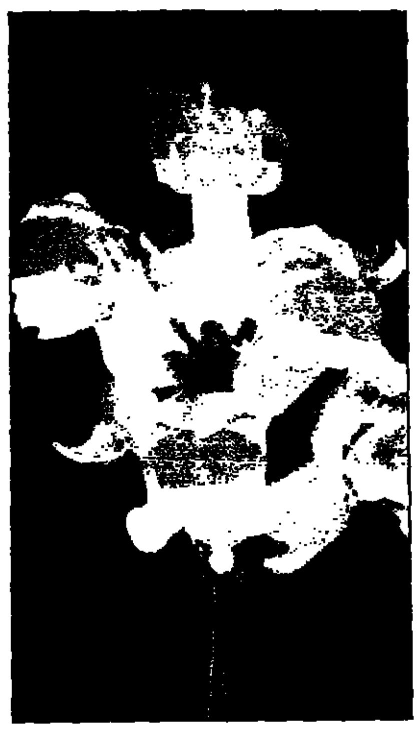
Wild-type relative of oilseed rape

MUTANT PEA



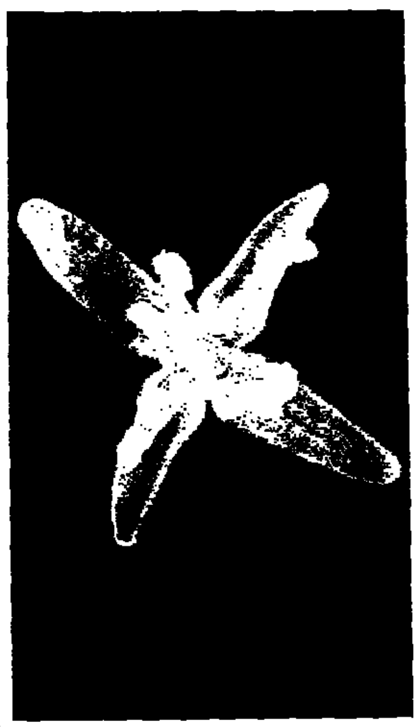
A really tangled plant

MUTANT ANTIRRHINUM



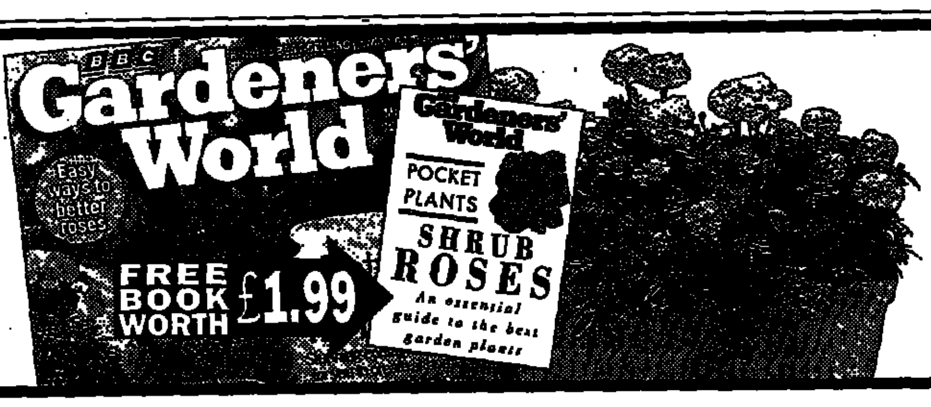
Mutation causes the development of the flower at the tip

MUTANT OILSEED RAPE



In this natural mutation the petals are absent

HOMES & GARDENS



CONTAINS POTS OF IDEAS FOR CONTAINERS.

Our May issue, the biggest of the year, is full of bright ideas for all sorts of containers, hanging baskets and window boxes. Nigel Colborn poses the container questions and answers them with easy-to-follow recipes which can help soften the lines of buildings, enhance windows and doorways and lighten dull areas of your garden. We report on the opening of Barnsdale, Geoff Hamilton's famous garden. We have a step-by-step guide to planting climbers. And there's a free pocket book on shrub roses (one of a new range of BBC Pocket Plant books and videos) worth £1.99.

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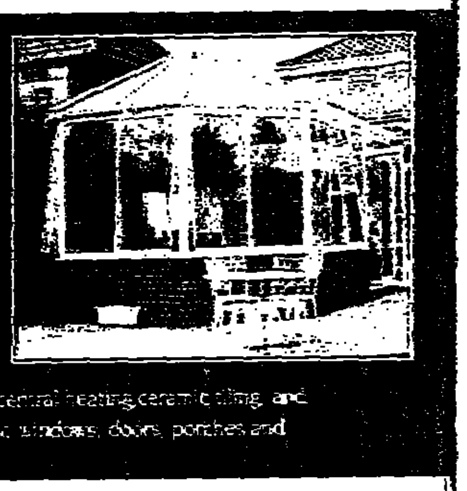

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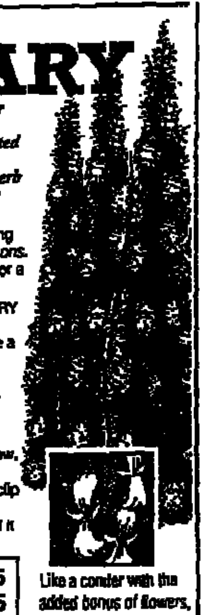

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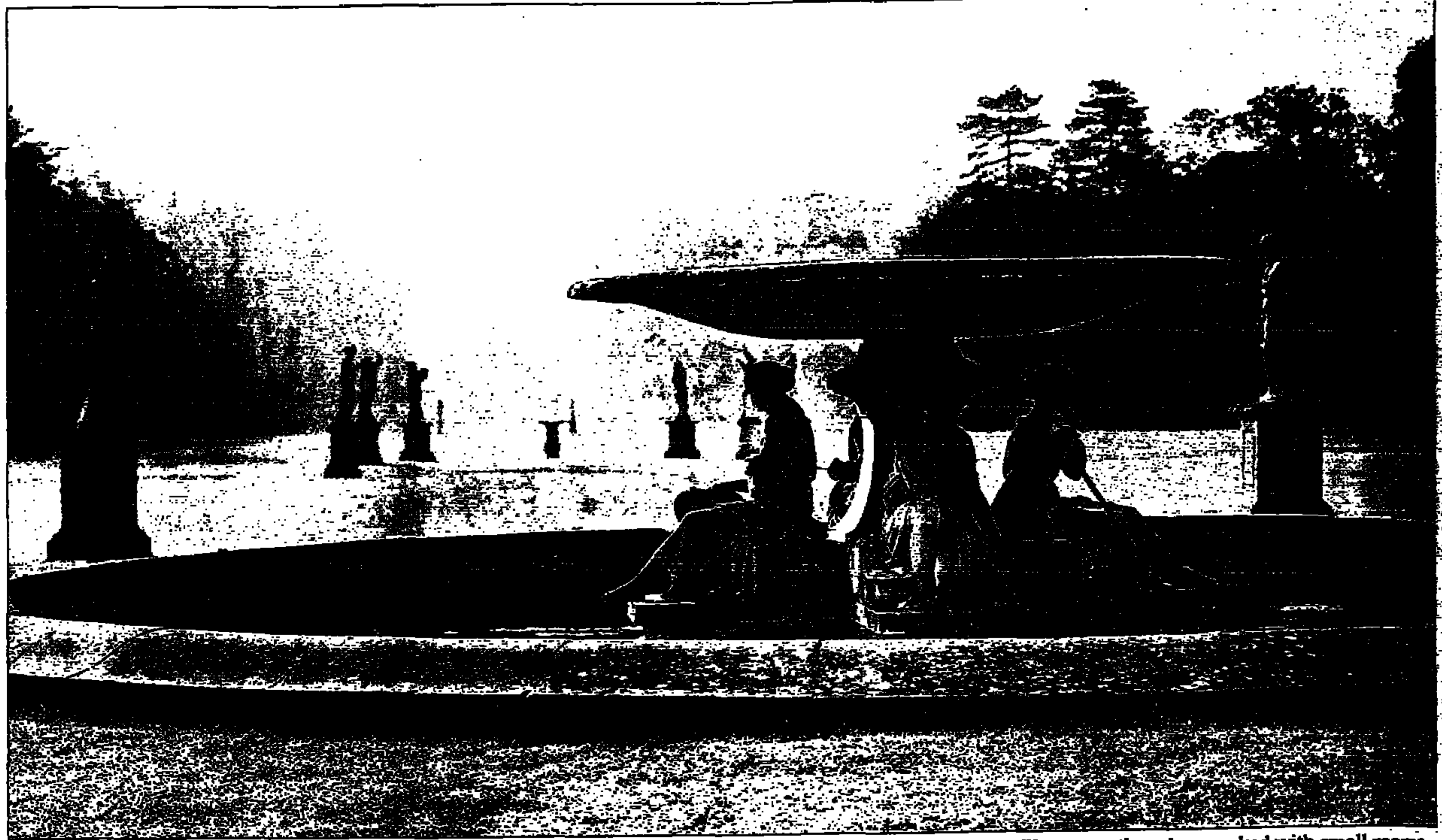

Wrest Park gardens, Silsoe, Bedfordshire, looking across the marble fountain. A long canal leads to a large 1710 pavilion, a trysting place packed with small rooms

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OPEN THIS WEEKEND

■ Wrest Park, Silsoe, Bedfordshire (01525 860152)

Off A6 east of Silsoe village. Open weekends and bank hols 10am-6pm until Oct 26. £2.75, children £1.40, OAPs £2.10

Built on a grand scale during the 18th century for a tea family, the de Greys, Wrest's 150 acres are being restored gradually so that none of the magic of a slightly overgrown landscape is lost. Mown paths lead through wilderness areas to a fine, airy Palladian summer house, classical ruins and unexpected statues and vast Greek vases.

The first sight of the garden is dominated by a big, dull Victorian terrace with parterres and a large number of statues, which give no *hint of the enchanting atmosphere* beyond. A long canal leads to a large 1710 pavilion by Thomas Archer, a trysting place packed with small rooms and heated by fires hidden behind painted panels. Woodland walks arrive at a serpentine pool with a Chinese pavilion.

The main garden was probably designed by Batty Langley in the early 18th century. Later, some of his work was de-formalised by Capability Brown who, according to family letters, was considered tedious company.

■ Catforth Gardens, Roots Lane, Catforth, Lancashire (01772 690561)

Six miles NW of Preston. Open daily 10.30am-5pm until mid Sept. £2, children 50p, OAPs £1.50

This unusual two-and-a-half-acre garden is a testimony to managing excellent planting with minimal watering, enforced by an 18-month hosepipe ban. Thick mulches and appropriate planting have reduced the need for water almost to nil. It is also a testimony to friendship — a co-operative venture between neighbours Tony and Judith Bradshaw and Christine and Bill Moore. The Bradshaws' bungalow garden, which is planted with spring bulbs, shrubs, trees and perennials to give year-round colour, now links into the Moores' cottage garden, which is planted around their farmhouse.

The neighbours admit to being "plantaholics" and so joined forces (and gardens), adding a nursery, from which they sell a wide range of plants, including 150 varieties of geranium. They have about 400 *varieties, which now make up the* National Collection of geraniums. Some of the woodland varieties will be in bloom now. Other attractions include flowering cherries, azaleas, spotty-leaved pulmonaria, spring bulbs and about 20 varieties of dicentra, including *D. 'Brownie'* which flowers from now until late July and has pale pink flowers and blue-grey foliage that turns brown as it ages.

The Bradshaws' bungalow garden, with its stream, waterfall, pond and bog garden, all started from bare lawn 13 years ago, is the oldest of the two gardens. The Moores' garden was a cricket pitch until eight years ago and now the planting is complemented by two pools and a waterfall. A new garden, started four years ago in a paddock, has large pools and a former pit has been transformed into a water lily pool, all of them lined with clay.

■ The Plantation Garden, 4 Earlham Road, Norwich (01603 611669)

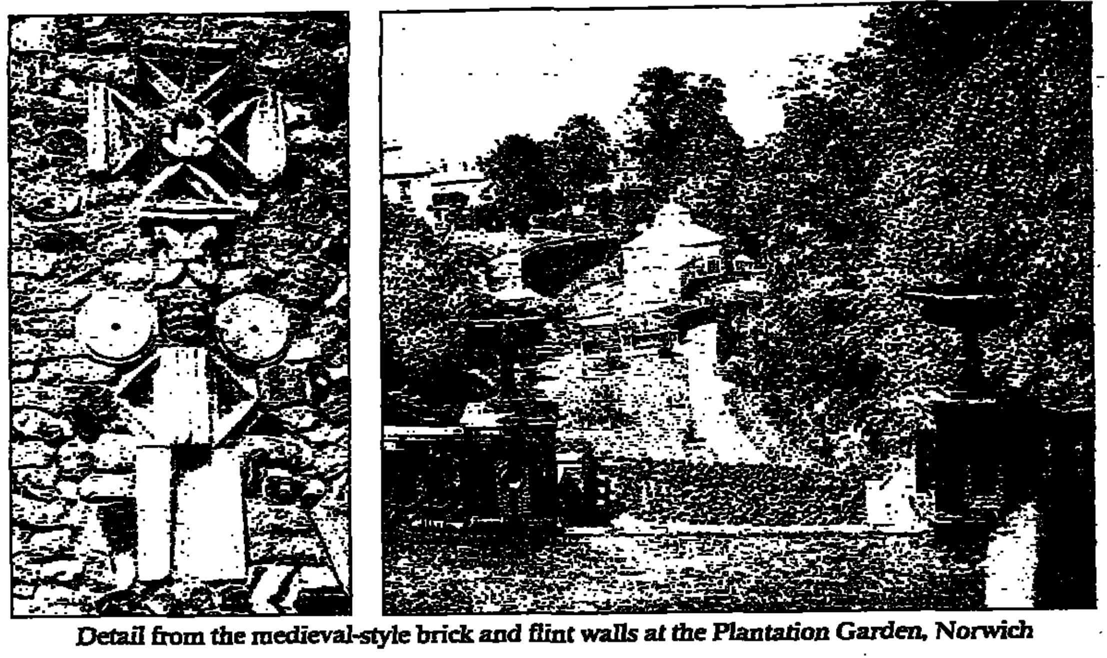
Close to St John's Cathedral. Entrance between Crofters Hotel and Beeches Hotel. Open Suns only until mid Oct, 2-5pm. Private visits by appointment only. £1, children free

Tomorrow this three-acre garden close to Norwich city centre will be open to raise funds for the National Gardens Scheme. Volunteers have spent the past 17 months restoring this Victorian suburban garden, which was made originally by a cabinet maker/property developer named Henry Trevor.

The garden is in a chalk quarry and designed in romantic, picturesque style, with walks along the side of the quarry. A Gothic fountain towers 30ft and various medieval style "ruins" dot the garden. Even the propagating house has medieval arcading, and the garden walls are made of flint and brick, echoing the vernacular ecclesiastical style. Gargoyles are set into some of the walling, alongside ornamental bricks from mock medieval chimneys, which were all the rage locally in the second half of the 19th century when the garden was being formed. Church windows have been used to decorate some of the walls and one face of the quarry has a 60ft-long terrace with pedestals, balustrades and urns. Next year the Plantation Garden Preservation Trust hopes to restore the rustic bridge.

Funds do not stretch to elaborate planting but mature trees give a peaceful atmosphere to the place where the hum of city traffic is hardly audible. "I find that the cares of the world drop away when I am here," says Sheila Adam, who organises the garden tours.

JANE OWEN



Detail from the medieval-style brick and flint walls at the Plantation Garden, Norwich

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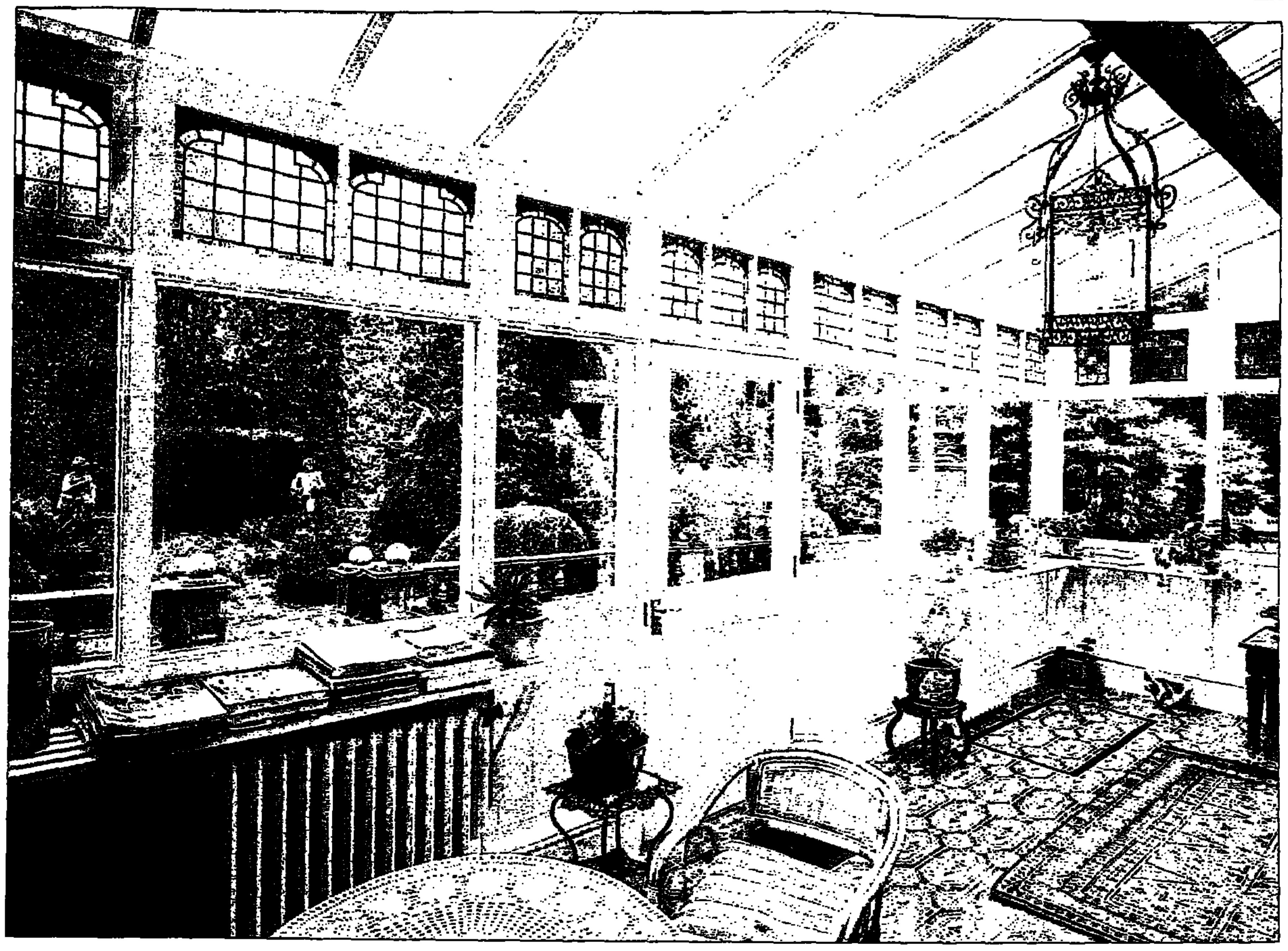
Oak panelling and stained glass give Elm Lodge a baronial air. **Ronald Faux** visits a house built in the grand manner

DES JENSON

The drawing room has oak panelling and a brass fireplace

Victorian drama in Lakeland



The large conservatory at Elm Lodge, above, is heated by the sun and by a boiler in a cellar beneath the ceramic-tiled floor

Here is a house that will impress the clients, thought Colin Bradford-Nutter when he bought Elm Lodge in Ravenstonedale, Cumbria, more than 25 years ago. The scrap metal merchant and racehorse breeder from Lancashire decided that his office in Bury, marooned in an ocean of junk, lacked a certain credibility when he met Greek admirals with battleships to dispose of and Middle Eastern potentates seeking special metals.

Appearances were important. "I found the Eden Valley by accident. I came to buy the steam engine turntable in Appleby, which was a hefty tonnage, and I grew really to appreciate this corner of Cumbria. It is extremely peaceful and undisturbed. I asked what was on the market and ended up with Elm Lodge, seven bedrooms, a full-size billiards table and 16 acres. It has been our family home ever since," he says.

As a scrap metal dealer's residence, Elm Lodge ranks as a property from Harold Steptoe's wilder fantasies. It was built on a grand scale by a Victorian with an eye for style and position. The grey slate roof, stout walls and commanding turret rising above a fringe of mature woodland hint of Balmoral, with the Howgill fells doubling for the hills of Deeside and forming a magnificant backdrop to the property.

The grounds cover more acres than the neighbouring village, shielded by an impressive stone wall and sheltered on the southwest side by a stand of trees from which the house takes its name.

When the Bradford-Nutters moved there, the house had a gloom chiefly attributable to a 45-volt electrical system, installed in the days before the National Grid brought bright lights to Ravenstonedale. Dark oak panelling, some dating from the 17th century and recovered from Brougham Hall, a demolished Cumbrian mansion, probably added to a sombre atmosphere which has been dispelled by transforming the power system and redecorating with brightness and good taste. Original Victorian features have been retained in a house that was built and had been owned by only one family before the Bradford-Nutters moved in.

Elm Lodge has always been a family home but the children have now moved away and their parents are moving to a 13th-century hall near Clitheroe, closer to grandchildren and business interests. Mr Bradford-Nutter throws wide the oak door of a small room. "This is a wonderful feature," he says, gesturing grandly towards a magnificent florally decorated lavatory, a throne among thrones, called the Deluge. When the chain is pulled the Deluge performs as its name suggests. "There is another one downstairs. They work superbly," he says. Grand closets are complemented by huge baths and plumbing on an heroic scale.

Elm Lodge was built in the 1880s and has many examples of fine craftsmanship, particularly in linenfold panelling that adds a baronial air to the house, fireplaces of polished marble and brass, and an oak central staircase that climbs past a stained glass window with four panels, two of them depicting delightful Arcadian scenes. Everywhere there is elegant plasterwork on cornices and mouldings.

The main bedroom is large, almost 21ft wide, with number two bedroom running off it. The latter was once a 17ft-wide dressing room, suggesting that the Victorians required plenty of elbow room to struggle into their bustles, corsets or starched collars. Every bedroom at Elm Lodge once had a dressing room that has now become another bedroom, making seven in all. Two other dressing rooms remain true to their original purpose yet are large enough to accommodate a single bed comfortably.

Oak panelling decorates the drawing room with its wide arched bay, marble and brass fireplace and hand-embossed copper-look wallpaper. Oak panels reach the full height of the 26ft-wide dining room, which has more oak in the strip flooring, as well as leaded light windows set in sandstone mullions and a minster fireplace. The sombre ambience is relieved by large white ceiling panels.

One imposing room leads to the next: a morning room in a cool shade of blue, a billiards room dominated by a full-size table which may remain. Mr Bradford-Nutter, a man of many parts in his time, from beer taster on behalf of the Customs and Excise and boxing promoter to cargo fleet operator and breeder of Highland cattle, has little time for the game.

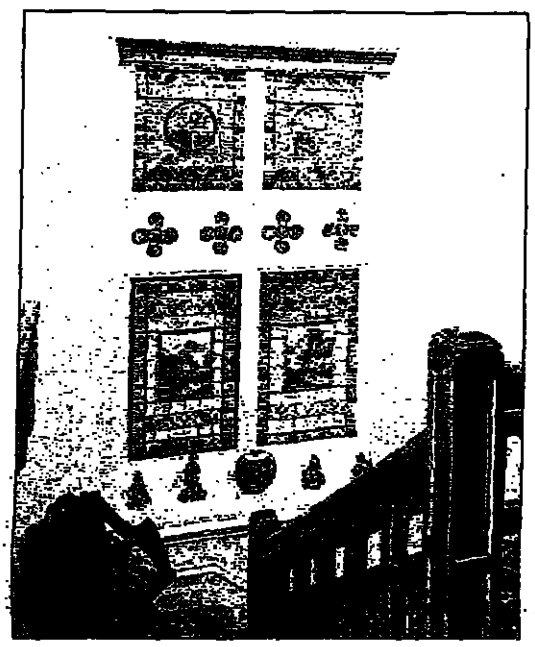
The original billiards room is now the kitchen-cum-breakfast room with a central island unit, Rayburn oil-fired stove and double oven. Concealed lights shine from a vaulted pine-lined ceiling. French windows lead from the new billiards room into a large conservatory that catches warmth both from the sun and from the central heating boiler housed in a cellar beneath the ceramic tiled floor.

Outdoors, beyond a walled garden and stable block, the grounds of Elm Lodge stir with springtime. A silver pheasant struts across one of the lawns noisily demanding a mate, and the first signs of life show in the shrubs and flower beds. In a few more weeks there will be massed ranks of rhododendrons.

Mature woodland with some exotic trees, among them a giant redwood planted in Victorian times, give Elm Lodge a sense of seclusion, screening even the tower of St Oswald's church, where the last Protestant woman in England to be executed for her faith is commemorated in the cast window. The year was 1638 and the Judge was George Jeffreys.

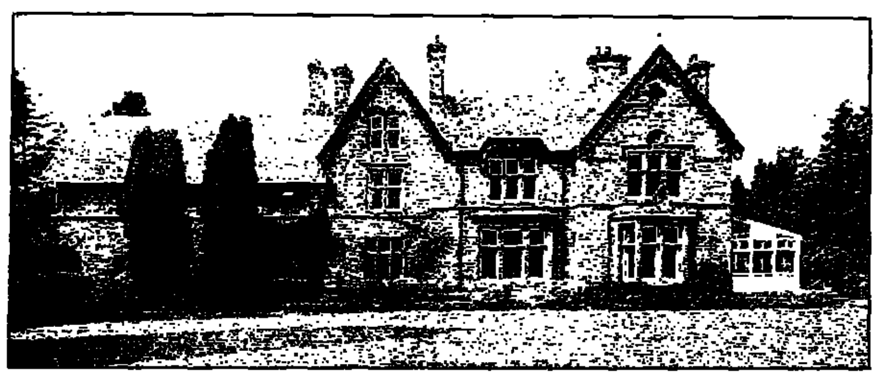
In those days the land between Stone Gill and Scandal Beck, where Elm Lodge stands, was largely open fields and life, certainly for Protestants, was less healthy. These days, Mr Bradford-Nutter insists, Eden's reputation for health and harmony is confirmed by official statistics.

The last Census recorded only 2.7 per cent of all residents over 16 classed as permanently sick. Only 9 per cent of children came from single-parent families, 23 per cent of households were occupied by married couples, twice the proportion compared with Kensington and Chelsea, and only 4.5 per cent of economically active adults were unemployed. Surely as close to an earthly paradise as you can get these days.



Arcadian scenes grace the oak central staircase

HOUSE OF THE WEEK



Elm Lodge, Ravenstonedale, Kirkby Stephen, Cumbria. ● **Price:** Offers over £600,000. ● **Setting:** 16 acres on the southern edge of the Eden Valley and near the centre of a fellside village. Within easy distance of M6 and A66 trans-Pennine route. ● **Shopping:** Penrith and Kendal are half an hour away by road and the market town of Kirkby Stephen has all essentials about seven miles away. ● **Entertainment:** Distinctly rural but plenty of it.

Stained glass windows are an original alternative to curtains and blinds

Homes with a touch of glass

A year and a half ago Diane Aben and Ted Allen bought a flat in a converted brewery near the City of London. The mahogany-panelled octagonal room which served as the managing director's office is now their sitting room.

The room has two large arched windows, one overlooking a busy road and the other a courtyard. The couple wanted something to cover the windows but did not like the idea of curtains or blinds hanging right from the top of the wall.

Eventually they decided on Roman blinds for the square part of the windows and stained glass for the two shallow arched areas. "We wanted a design which was modern, warm and unusual, not something that included fish or flowers," Miss Aben says.

They approached the stained glass artist Susan Ashworth, who after talking at length with the couple came up with three designs. "It is very important to see the site and to meet the people who are commissioning you. They're not just buying something which can be taken off the wall some time later, because stained glass will be part of the building. There should be no misunderstanding of what everyone's intentions are," Mrs Ashworth says.

Once the design (abstract) and colour (green, white and flashes of orange) had been decided, the two windows took about a month to make. They were made from glass, mouth blown in Sunderland. The cost was less than £800.

"I was ecstatic when they were put in. Because of the changing light they always look different, almost alive, but they match the room as well," Ms Aben says.

Mrs Ashworth is an associate member of the British Society of Master Glass Painters (BSMGP), a 500-member body which has a "Craftsman's Index" giving details of those fellows and associates willing to undertake new commissions. People ask for stained glass windows for all sorts of situations — to mask an unsightly view, to create privacy, or just to give a pleasing effect.

"Serious thought should be given to the architectural setting for the intended window and the lighting conditions of the location. The more carefully the initial brief is prepared, the more satisfactory will be the end result," says Ruth Cooke, secretary of the BSMGP.

Slides or photographs of earlier commissions can usually be supplied by the artists to assist with selection, although the society does recommend going to see examples of the artist's work.

"Most people think it's going to be incredibly expensive, but nine times out of ten you are only talking about hundreds of pounds," says stained glass artist Caroline Benyon, a fellow of the BSMGP, who also believes in plenty of preparatory work with the client.

Mrs Benyon has done a large variety of windows for people's homes. An underwater cameraman, for instance, wanted fish and corals on his front door, another client had a coat of arms with personal motifs in the surrounding diamond panes, and for the owner of a former dairy she designed abstract cows in blue and white. "I think stained glass windows can be a definite selling point for a house if the incoming people like the design," Mrs Benyon says.

Ian Beattie commissioned her to make a 7ft square window for an inside door at his home in Guernsey. For a long time he deliberated over its design, then one day a brochure arrived in the post advertising tapestry cushion covers.

"One cover had a pleasing medieval hunting picture with dogs, hawks and trees. I liked the pre-Raphaelite style of it, so that decided me," he says. His window will have a similar picture as the centrepiece, and around the borders there will be a large number of animals and flowers, so that each time he looks at it, he says, he will see something different.

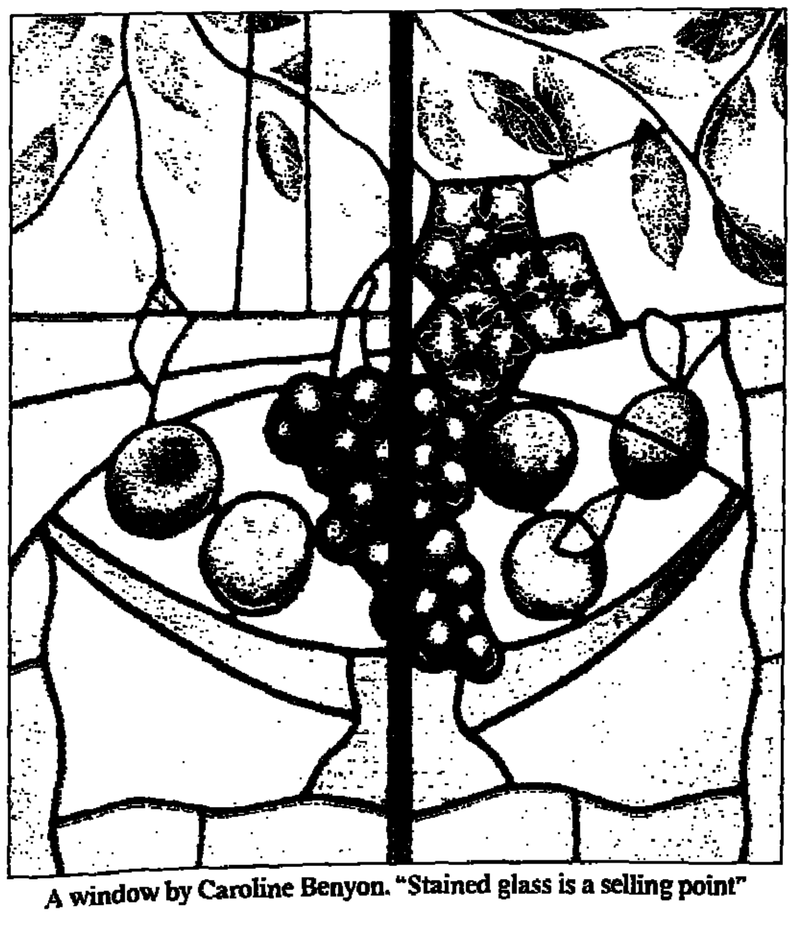
In general, once there is agreement between artist and client, the artist will make a cartoon, which is a full-sized drawing of the window showing the design and the lead lines. The glass will then be cut.

Glass is coloured in the manufacturing process, but additionally it can be painted by the stained glass artist. This involves the application of oxides of various metals, enamels and sometimes silver stain, which the artist then fires in a kiln.

The glass is finally cemented into the pieces of lead which have been soldered together. New lead and new stained glass should last well over 100 years before weakening.

"Stained glass can change the whole atmosphere of a room. It's the most dynamic thing you can do to a hole in the wall," Mrs Ashworth says.

CHRISTIAN DYMOND



A window by Caroline Benyon. "Stained glass is a selling point"

● *The British Society of Master Glass Painters, 5 Tivoli Place, Ilkley, West Yorkshire LS29 8SU (01943 602521). Web site: http://www.proteusweb.com/bsmgp For Craftsman's Inder please send large SAE to the Secretary, BSMGP.*

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It's not the number but the size of rooms that is appealing more to urban buyers, says **Faith Glasgow**

Space – the final frontier?

Spacious living has traditionally been associated with the detached five-bedroom family homes of suburbia and, beyond that, with rambling gardens and rural bliss. An urban existence is thought of as physically restricting, the cramped confines being traded off against location.

But it doesn't have to be that way — and the signs are that some buyers are prepared to pay a premium for the luxury of space with their urban home. They want to be at the heart of the metropolis and to be comfortable in stylish, spacious accommodation; they also want to make a statement about modern taste and urban chic.

Such buyers are looking for stunning spaces, rather than a raft of reception and "spare" rooms. They are singles or couples with little interest in extra bedrooms for children, for children are not part of the picture. This is grown-ups' territory.

Hence, the number of bedrooms in a home is less significant as a measure of desirability than the square footage.

The idea of space for city dwellers has its roots in the loft apartment culture of New York, where it is not uncommon to find a two-bedroom home of more than 2,000 sq ft. To put that into perspective, an average two-bedroom flat in the UK would be about 700-900 sq ft. In London, there has been a rash of loft-like conversions of warehouse, office blocks and municipal buildings over the past two years.

And the trend for urban space is not confined to private accommodation. London's newest and trendiest watering holes and restaurants — the Oxo Tower, Mezzo, Bank — have all made their mark as much through large-scale, dramatically designed interiors as through the food served. Space is the new indulgence, we are told.

Nina Richards is a space enthusiast. Her two-bedroom maisonette in Battersea, southwest London, is comfortable and has a low mortgage but, she says, it will no longer do. "I wouldn't move to another conventional flat," she says. "I'm obsessed with the idea of space. It started as a whim a few weeks ago, then I heard about a nearby school conversion by Sapcote and went to have a look round. I couldn't believe my eyes — I went back to my flat and felt like knocking all the walls down."

Yet the only flat she can afford, at £155,000 for a 1,300 sq ft shell, is partly below ground. "I like it because it has an outside space and a sunken floor, and there are light wells, so it's not dark. It is a compromise on the loft idea — but I have to compromise to afford this sense of space."

She expects to spend a further £60,000-£70,000 on designing and creating the interior she wants: a single bedroom, whitewashed brick, sandblasted glass walls, beechwood floors. "It'll be minimalist," she says.

Not everyone is as enthusiastic about the merits of space as a selling point, however. At Regalia, chairman David Goldstone says that if a developer is converting lofts and warehouses, and finds the positioning of the windows and the high ceilings would make for awkward interior walls and dark or badly proportioned rooms, he will make a virtue out of the space, despite its potential drawbacks and impracticalities.

"We perceive an optimum size for different rooms," he says. "A drawing room of, say, 300sq ft (20ft by 15ft) is a substantial space, but 400 sq ft is too much. Why pay more for the extra 100 sq ft you don't need?"

Nonetheless, the success of such conversions indicates that people are being seduced by large dimensions; and there is evidence that it is having an effect in the more conventional flat market, too. According to Peter Rollings at Foxton's South Kensington branch, large one-bedroom flats are commanding prices over £225,000.

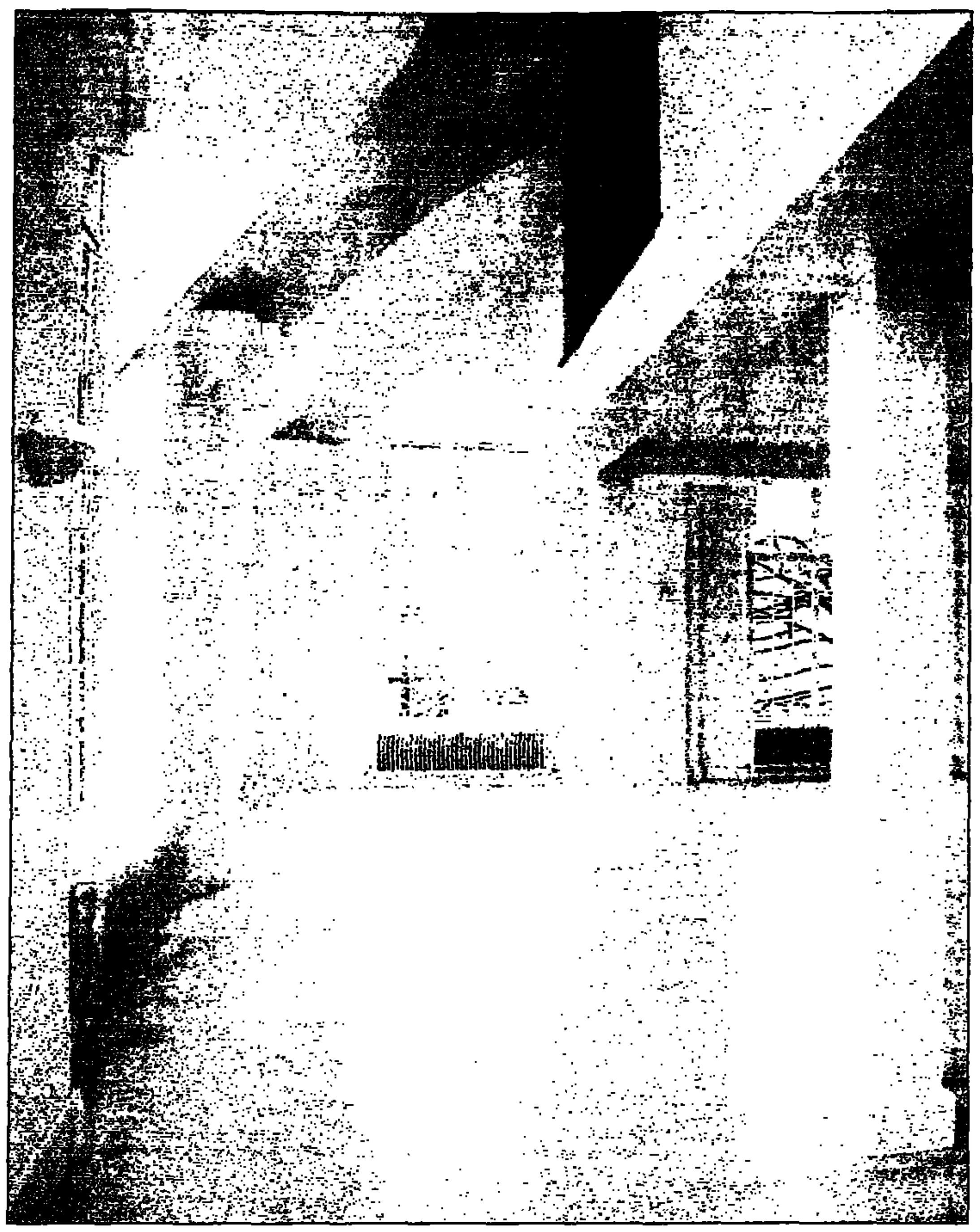
"We have a one-bedroom flat in Queensgate Gardens for £625,000 with a 28ft by 28ft ballroom for a reception room," he says.

Meanwhile, at Friend and Falcke's Clapham office, Guy Foster cites a two-bedroom flat in SW2 on the market at £375,000. "Buyers gasp when they see the price," he says, "but when they realise it is a huge apartment spanning 3,250 sq ft with a massive reception room, they understand why."

The trend is undoubtedly a top-of-the-market one. "Not long ago, everyone was concerned about the number of rooms for the price," says developer Anthony Lassman, who deals with prime central London property. "But that has changed. For example, a flat in Eaton Square, SW1, was bought last summer for £2.8 million. It's big — 3,150 sq ft — and originally it had three bedrooms and a maid's room; but the new owners have spent another £500,000 knocking two bedrooms together into one huge suite. The result is a magnificent two-bedroom flat for £3.3 million.

"No developer would have dreamt of doing that work to it, but if it were on the open market now there would be buyers fighting for it," he says.

Mr Lassman is currently converting a three-bedroom Mayfair mews house to two bedrooms and one huge reception room; it will come onto the market at about £800,000. "These projects used to be regarded as bold, and you risked narrowing your market too much. But now there is so much evidence from new buyers that they want space that I feel confident — provided the property is in the right area."


These converted apartments at Hotham Hall, Putney, west London, are designed for spacious living

THINKING IN SQUARE FEET

Visualising square footage or meterage is second nature for international buyers; but there is no tradition of quoting a single area figure (or, by extension, of calculating price per square foot) in the UK residential property market. The British think in terms of numbers of bedrooms and reception rooms, with individual floor measurements thrown in.

But the signs are that some British buyers are becoming more familiar with the notion of floorspace. "We're starting to include square footage and square meterage, which we never used to do," says Peter Rollings at Foxton's. "The British buy rooms, but increasingly people are insisting that they must have at least 1,500 sq ft."

In part that's a consequence of the strength of the international market in London over the past few years; overseas buyers expect such details and agents have become much more familiar with them. Mr Rollings also cites the introduction of the Property Misdescription Act, restricting estate agents' literary prowess to facts alone in their details of properties. "Square footage and floorplans are as factual as you can get," he says.

The trend also reflects the interest in shell conversions, where there are no rooms to count and, even if there were, they would give little indication of the true extent of an apartment. At Knight Frank, Charles Barclay gives the example of the St Peter's development in Covent Garden, London. "The units were about 1,500 sq ft, sold as shells at £420 per ft [which amounts to about £600,000], and all, without exception, were made into two-bedroom flats. In terms of price per bedroom, then it's not a very good deal."

Square footage does make it easier to compare like with like. If you're quoted a price of £600,000 for 1,000 sq ft, then you're probably paying too much. Conversely, the opportunity to buy 600 sq ft at £200,000 in a central London development such as County Hall sounds very attractive.

But there is a danger of over-simplification, as Nicholas Pearce of Beaney Pearce says: "People can be misled when they hear that the flat or house next door achieved £500 per ft, and think it is applicable to them. But you still need to take into account the view, the amenities and the condition of the property."

So although the trend towards square footage is likely to continue, and is a useful tool in conjunction with other details, don't expect room numbers to go away. "The average buyer is not familiar with square footage, and you can't use it in traditional family areas where room numbers are important," says developer Anthony Lassman. "Customers don't visualise square footage easily," Mr Rollings says. "I still take them to have a look at the property itself."

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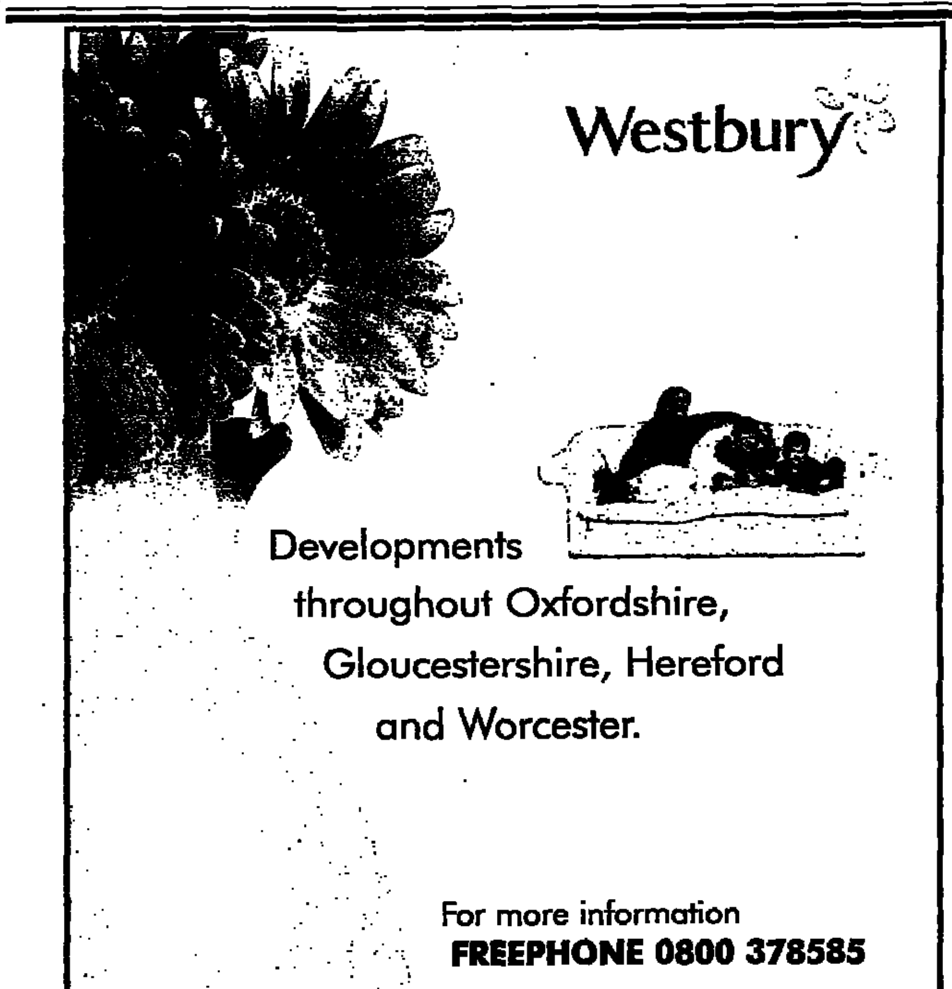
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FARMHOUSES

GLOUCESTERSHIRE
Hillesley Farmhouse, Hillesley. Grade II listed period farmhouse in 2.5 acres of garden and paddocks, in a popular village. Seven bedrooms, three reception rooms, office/utility, study, kitchen/breakfast room. Listed Cotswold stone tithe barn and *granary/garage. About £345,000 (Humberts, 01666 502284)*

WEST SUSSEX
Penns Farm, East Harting, Petersfield. Grade II listed 15th-century house in 0.75 acre garden on the edge of a downland village. Four bedrooms, bathroom, sitting room, dining room, kitchen, boot room, cloakroom. Period outbuilding/workshop, wood store and kennel. About £350,000 (Humberts, 01730 261612)

CAMBRIDGESHIRE
Manor Farm, Ashton, near Stamford. Grade II listed traditional stone farmhouse in 3.5 acres of gardens and paddocks, in a village. Four bedrooms, two bathrooms (one en suite), drawing room, sitting room, study, breakfast kitchen, cloakroom and utility. Range of stabling. About £305,000 (Savills, 01780 766222)

CHERYL TAYLOR

Invest in the no-frills facelift

Simple, fresh, uncluttered presentation can add value to your house, says

Christine Webb

CHARLOTTE HENEAGE

Plain flooring is a major selling point. "Get rid of the frills and fuss, and ditch your clutter," says interior decorator Joanna Wood

Surfing the crest of a wave in a rising market demands a certain flair for "tarting up" a property without spending a fortune. So long as a house's size and position are right, stylish presentation can maximise its price.

Caroline and Nicholas Shott bought a four-bedroom house in Lavender Hill, south London, last *summer* for £215,000 but Mr Shott decided he did not like it. So Mrs Shott spent about £6,000 and ten days on improvements, such as *painting inside and out, replacing the* front door and having curtains made. Four months later, Foxton's sold the house for a good deal more — *£252,000 and Mrs Shott even took the* new curtains with her.

Mrs Shott, a partner in Carter Shott, a Battersea agency which *lets top-of-the-market properties, also* acts as a property-finding agent for buyers. "The demand for property in London is similar to that of the 1980s, *but the supply isn't there,*" she says. "People will offer more than your asking price if the house is well presented."

Giles Underhill of Foxton's Battersea office, says: "Mrs Shott's house is a good example of how you can transform something by spending comparatively little money. We found that, even when the market was sluggish, stylish developers were still getting exceptional prices. And if three houses in the same street are for sale, the most stylish place will sell first — and for more.

"The people who spend the most are those who earn the most and have the least time to spend on decorating. They will pay a premium to move straight into somewhere they like."

So what is Mrs Shott's advice to those considering a make-over of their house before selling? "Clear *away your clutter — 1980s style frills* and fuss are a real turn-off now. Go for simple things, like displaying eggs in a kitchen basket and hanging *up a pretty chopping board. Cover a* grotty sofa or chair with a bedspread or throw. Paint the front door and polish up its brassware or, if it won't shine, replace with new," she says.

"I can't stress too strongly the importance of a house's exterior. Behind the low front wall of a house I sold in Battersea was crazy paving, which I changed to bricks laid in a herringbone pattern. The bay window had a flat roof, so I had a builder put a little curved lead end roof on that, cracked window sills were repaired and the front door was repainted. We're not talking big money here, but the house suddenly became one of the smartest in the street and sold for our asking price."

Garry Cook of Roomservice Finishing Group, Chessington, Surrey, whose company dresses show houses, says: "If there's a lot of property available in the area, you want *yours to be memorable*, and you can achieve that by using imagination in one room, say a child's bedroom. But its best to err on the neutral side. The *real trick is to appeal to the broadest* cross-section possible."

Good kitchens are still prime selling points, and he suggests painting or replacing *kitchen* cupboard doors for a neat up-date. "Presentation all comes down to cleanliness, and smell is very important. Do make the lavatory smell sweet. All your senses are working overtime when you go into a property, and first impressions count."

Rebecca Read, of Cluttons residential department, also offers some tips. "What you're selling is the atmosphere of the property and you need to look at it through the eyes of a prospective buyer coming through the door for the first time," she says.

"We've just sold a fairly modern house in Chelsea for £920,000 that the owner bought for £620,000 in 1993. *She didn't spend* a fortune, but she redid the house in this cool, uncluttered look with pale carpets and walls and good modern furni*ture. She was ahead of her time.*"

But, she says, any house can be made to look its best on very little outlay. "Clean the windows, remove net curtains, or *at least* wash them. Get as much light through the windows as possible," she suggests. "Shampoo carpets, buy plain double bedspreads (preferably white) to cover your duvets. If you have pets, or are a smoker, open windows to get rid of the smell. If the garden looks forlorn, sweep up any leaves and put in bedding plants."

Interior decorator Joanna Wood, who has a shop in Pimlico, central London, specialises in residential developments and show houses. "The frills and flowers of the 1980s hid a multitude of flaws and now people are looking at the bones of a building," she says.

"You don't need a total redecoration. Ditch your clutter, don't have three chairs where one will do, stick to one bottle of bath essence, try to get as much off the surfaces as possible. Replace fussy curtains with blinds.

"*Lighting is important: you could* invest in low-voltage fittings which give a modern feel. If you want to go further, throw out carpets, then sand, *polish* or varnish floorboards or parquet and use rugs."

PROPERTY NEWS

■ THERE is little sign of pre-election jitters in the country house market, *Amanda Loose writes.* Cluttons says people are far more pre-occupied with the shortage of property for sale, while John D. Wood reports an increase in people making pre-emptive bids well in excess of the asking price before active marketing begins.

■ HOUSE prices in prime central London sites rose by 7.7 per cent in the first quarter of 1997, according to Savills. The highest rise for houses was 14.5 per cent in Belgravia.

■ LONDON's newest street is Farrier's Walk, just off the Boltons in *Chelsea, southwest London. It has 22* town houses built on a site formerly occupied by BT and electronic entry gates. Prices from £480,000 to £1.1 *million. Contact De Groot Collis on* 0171-235 8090.

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ARTESIAN ROAD, W2 Freehold £645,000
A well presented, low-built house in a quiet street. 3 bedrooms, bathroom, shower room, reception 8.11m (26'7), kitchen/dining room 7.08m (23'3), cloakroom, patio garden and *roof terrace 8.45m x 2.9m (27'9 x 9'6).*
KENSINGTON: 0171-727 0705

BERKSHIRE – Winkfield *Windsor 5 miles Central London 26 miles*
An attractive family house in a splendid garden setting with separate staff accommodation.
4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, reception hall, 2 reception rooms, study area, kitchen, utility. Garaging, walled kitchen garden, south facing garden. About .57 ha (1.4 acres).
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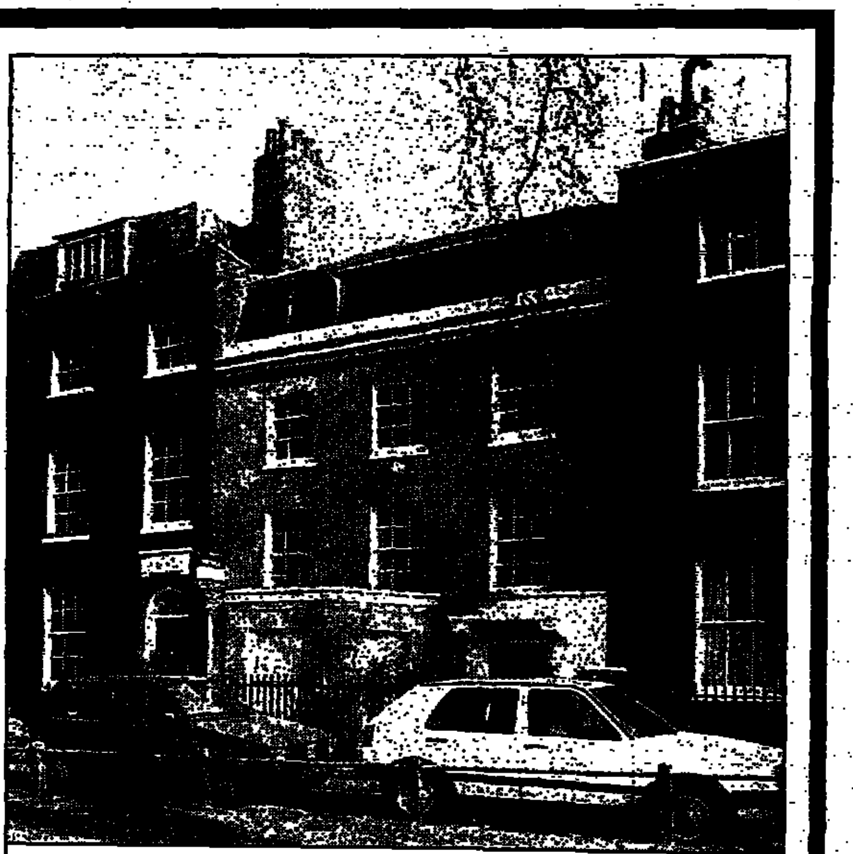

CLAPHAM COMMON SOUTHSIDE, SW4 Freehold £450,000
A delightful Grade II Listed Georgian house with views over Clapham Common. The house has plenty of entertaining and living space with an impressive *first floor drawing room.* 6 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, 2 cloakrooms, 4 reception rooms, kitchen, utility, cellar, rear garden.
BATTERSEA: 0171 228 0174

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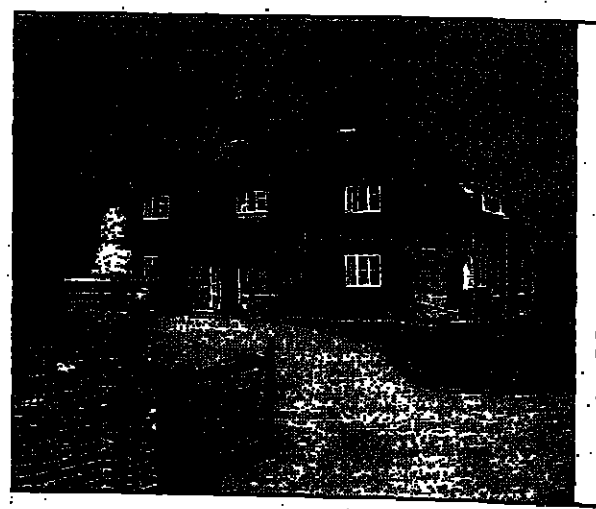
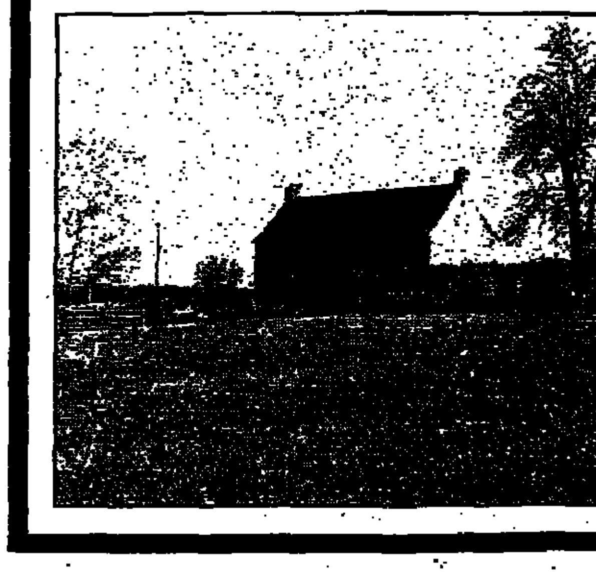
HAMPSHIRE
Hordle, Nr Lymington
A refurbished family house of character in the New Forest, 3 miles from the sea.
5 bedrooms, shower room, bathroom, 3 reception rooms, conservatory, kitchen, utility, garage/workshop. About 0.5 ha (1.2 acres).
Price Guide: £365,000
LYMINGTON: 01590 677233



HAMPSHIRE
North Sydmonton
Newbury 4½ miles
An excellent small country house in a rural location with delightful gardens.
3 bedrms, 2 bathrms, reception hall, 3 reception rooms, kitchen, utility, cloakroom, double garage. About 0.3 ha (.74 of an acre).
Price Guide: £365,000
NEWBURY: 01635 523225



WILTSHIRE
Malmesbury
A delightful cottage in a rural situation with equestrian facilities and paddocks.
4 bedrooms, bathroom, 2 reception rooms, cloakroom, kitchen, *utility*, conservatory, hobbies room, garage, parking, stabling, haystore, tack room. *About 2.2 ha (5.3 acres).*
Price Guide: £285,000
CIRENCESTER: 01285 642244

MIDDLESEX – Harrow Weald Price Guide: £575,000
About 12 miles from Central London, an outstanding 16th century heavily timbered farmhouse listed Grade II* with a walled garden. 6/7 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, reception hall, great hall, 3 reception rooms, kitchen. Garaging, swimming pool.
PETER ROBSON & CO: 01923 820622 JOHN D WOOD & CO: 0171 493 4106

HAMPSHIRE
Kingsclere
A spacious listed cottage set in the centre of this popular *village with its garden* running down to the Galley Brook.
4 bedrooms, bathroom, shower room, reception room, kitchen, garden lobby, terrace & garden.
Price Guide: £150,000
NEWBURY: 01635 523225

Granny's wisdom, and her cure-all remedies, had their origins in rural life, but now the species is in danger of becoming extinct

We'll all miss this wise old bird

DOWN TO EARTH

PAUL HEINEY

You can argue that depopulation of the countryside will have disastrous consequences for all forms of rural activity, but has anyone given any thought to what it will do for the general wisdom of the nation? No one worries about wisdom; there are no league tables to measure it, you cannot take a degree in it. it has not (yet) been argued over in the general election. Wisdom is not high on anybody's agenda, but we all recognise wisdom when we hear it and, if you think about it, where you hear it most often is on the lips of granny.

It is highly likely that much of what has come to be accepted as "granny's wisdom" had its origins in rural life. So what is to happen when the landscape is devoid of grannies, as it is in some parts of hedges and trees?

This is no idle concern. Older people find rural living increasingly difficult, with sparse bus services, closure of village shops, inability to get anywhere without a car. Country grannies could disappear as easily as the skylark, and we shall not notice till we wake up one morning and miss their sweet song. Then it will be too late, because granny will have taken up her hot water bottle and fled to sheltered accommodation, leaving owls as sole guardians of rural wisdom.

The vital role of a granny in the world of wisdom has been brought home to me by a book called *Grannies' Remedies*. It was published in the 1950s and there have been many similar ones. Note: no sister-in-law's remedies, brother's remedies, or tips from second cousins twice removed. Granny's remedies appear to be the only ones that work. But are the present generation of grannies laying down contemporary understanding for future generations before grannies disappear from rural life for ever?

I would like to quote from this slim volume and show precisely the nature of the threat. Let us start with the common cold. It has plagued us for centuries, and science seems no closer to a cure than it was 50 years ago. But granny is on top of it: "Walk with the toes turned outward. Walk with the chin slightly above the horizontal line, as if looking at the top of a man's hat in front of you, or at the eaves or roof of a house. Walk a good deal with your hands pressed behind you. Sit with the lower part of your spine pressed against the chair-back." If this did not work, you could "wring out a piece of flannel in boiling water, sprinkle it with turpentine and lay it on the chest". Or, better: "Grandmother knew a man who claimed to have cured himself of the flu by putting into his boots a half-gill of hot whisky and putting his boots on instantly." For complete control of all colds and flu I suppose you could do all three at once, at the risk of walking down the street looking and smelling like a haughty, alcoholic painter and decorator. My own granny's method involved a towel, a large bowl, steaming water and inhaling balm. I recall the name "Mentholatum". Is this still made? I hope so; a sharp sniff of it would recapture childhood days for me like rice pudding does for others. On occasions, when the large bowl could not be found, a chamber pot was used, and I am sure the likes of Dr Antony Clare would explain my present character by pointing out that formative years spent with head under towel, inhaling vapours while staring deep into a chamber pot, wondering when it was last used, can lead to all sorts of troubles in later life. I suppose every generation needs something to sniff. At least the worst ours did was give us chamber-pot phobia for life.

And do you know why granny always told you never to speak with your mouth full? "A man's body and his mind are like a jerkin and a jerkin's lining; rumple the one, you rumple the other. Chatted food is half digested." It was not to preserve fellow diners from the sight of the open gob that we were required to close mouths while eating, it was to stop the chat.

Of course, many of the sources on which granny's wisdom is based relied on the collection of evidence which is no longer there. For example, it was all very well for a 19th-century granny to tell us, "If you poke the fire and it burns brightly, your sweetheart is in a good temper", but what useful portents can a modern granny gleam from the behaviour of a central heating boiler? What use is the certain knowledge that, "If your apron falls away from your waist, a new baby is on the way" when the number of women of child-bearing age who these days wear aprons can be chalked on one side of a slate. And does, "If you buy a broom in May, you're sure to sweep a corpse away" apply to vacuum cleaners?

Clearly there is much wisdom which has outlived its time, but it would be a cruel shame if we were to lose the essential truths that only granny collected. So thank you, granny, for "A handful of good life is better than a bushel of good learning", and may you soon be added to that list of vulnerable species classified as wise old birds.

● *Readers' letters are welcome on countryside matters. Write to: Paul Heiney, Weekend, The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN.*

A private prayer for butterflies

National nature reserves are costly to manage and restore, so a new commercial solution has been found

GILL ALLEN

Ron Foster, the restoration manager of Redlands Aggregates, which is managing King's Wood, near Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire, as a nature reserve instead of quarrying for sand

King's Wood has always deserved to be in nature's premier league. This distinguished jumble of oak and silver birch is almost certainly a remnant of the original wildwood, the arboreal carpet that rolled across the land bridge from Europe after the retreating ice 7,000 years ago to cover most of Britain.

Let's extend the football analogy. Until recently the prime ancient woodland at Heath and Reach, near Leighton Buzzard in Bedfordshire, has been playing in too low a division for its pedigree: less than fully fit and no pride in its appearance.

And that's how things would have stayed in the old days of relegation and no promotion for nature habitat. But in wildlife protection today, as in sport, money talks. Redland Aggregates, owner of part of the wood, has signed an agreement with English Nature and won promotion for its charge.

In 1995, English Nature elevated a 70-acre segment of King's Wood which Redland owns from a mere site of special scientific interest (SSSI) to a national nature reserve (NNR). Exploiting a previously little-used clause in the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act, the company effectively "bought" entry into the top habitat designation in Britain — there are only 184 NNRs — by agreeing to manage the wood into better health.

This spring Redland began to fell the wood's alien features: hundreds of conifers ill-advisedly planted among the oaks in the late 1950s. Last year it coppiced many of the wood's small-leafed limes. Stygian gloom has been replaced by sunlight, breeze and birdsong. There are high hopes that the white admiral, purple emperor and other butterflies and delicate woodland flowers will return, and that one of the few colonies of adder in the county can expand into the new clearings.

Far from flagging it offside, conservationists are applauding the deal with Redland, the first and so far the only one involving a private company. Dr Simon Lyster, the director-general of the Wildlife Trusts, is untroubled by the partial privatisation of nature conservation. "I have no problem with this. The important thing is that we have well managed NNRs. If industry is willing to take on the financial burden, that's good for conservation. We should all be delighted."

In an ideal world there would be many more NNRs. Their regular maintenance, the cutting, thinning and scrub control which is crucial to their health and survival, would be paid for out of public funds, just as farmers get EU subsidies to achieve better grain harvests.

However, English Nature finds it difficult enough to eke out its annual grant from the Treasury to pay for essential management on the NNRs it owns outright, or looks after in agreement with landowners, let alone create new ones and spread a meagre budget ever more thinly. But when it took over as the body responsible for nature conservation in England in 1991, English Nature found a way of extending its estate of NNRs without increasing its financial commitment. It blew the dust off a provision in the Wildlife Act, put in at the insistence of the voluntary conservation sector but hardly taken up.

The provision in Section 35 of the Act allows for new NNRs to be created and run by "approved bodies" — organisation, public or private — which can show they have the resources and expertise to fund and run a long-term management programme.

Only two Section 35 NNRs had been designated by the old Nature Conservancy Council up to 1991. Since then, its successor, English Nature, has promoted Section 35 more vigorously and in five years has approved a further 29.

The new NNRs are owned and maintained by nature trusts, local authorities and large conservation bodies, such as the National Trust. In 1995, Redland became the first industrial organisation to gain "approved body" status. Its 70 acres in King's Wood were added to an existing, adjoining Section 35 NNR, created in 1993 and run by Bedfordshire County Council and the county wildlife trust.

Redland, Britain's fourth biggest aggregates company, acquired its part of King's Wood in the 1960s with a view to tapping the rich reserves of sand beneath it. When it realised the wood's ecological importance, the company abandoned any plans to quarry there.

The conservation programme in the wood is directed by Ron Foster, Redland's restoration manager. He uses contractors to fell the conifers and open up a network of sunny, sheltered rides as habitat for butterflies and flowers. Mr Foster admits there is no profit for the company in the wood. The small return on the felled timber just about covers extraction costs. "I think the private landowner would be highly unlikely to set off on a project like this," he says.

Why does a company, with duties to its shareholders, involve itself in a such an uncommercial activity? "We have a fair reputation in restoring land we have quarried. I felt we were getting to the stage where that was not enough in itself, that we ought to show we are good land managers as well — we own a lot of land which there is never any chance of us working," Mr Foster says.

English Nature describes the agreement with Redland as a landmark, which it hopes other companies will follow. It has announced an ambitious target of designating ten new Section 35 NNRs a year over the next three years.

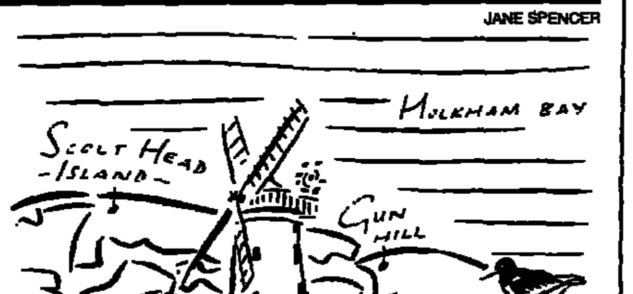
"We must be bold and try it," says the Wildlife Trusts' Dr Lyster. "These days, we shouldn't just be hanging on to what we have, but trying to restore and recover habitat. Let's get as many sites as we can up to NNR quality. If that means the private sector becoming involved, so be it.

"It doesn't worry me that Redland is the only company involved so far. Let's see how it gets on. If it makes a success of it and gets some good PR, maybe other companies will follow. I would rather take it slowly and see it done successfully than have a whole rash of NNRs go into the private sector without proper thought and have it go wrong."

GARETH HUW DAVIES

ON THE SPOT: NORTH NORFOLK COAST

JANE SPENCER



● *Rural recommendations*

The place: Burnham Overy Staithe.

The view: To the north, Scolt Head Island nature reserve and Gun Hill across the spookily atmospheric creeks and salt marshes bordering the North Sea. To the south, Burnham Overy Mill in an undulating landscape. Plus, dramatic skies.

The appeal: A perfect walk (to the sea) along the dyke. Abundant bird life (oystercatchers, dunlins, herons, barn owls) and few people. The beach at Holkham Bay stretches for ever and is usually deserted. The area is a paradise for the watercolourist. It is the most peaceful spot in England, and the sound of boats' rigging against metal masts is pure music.

Aficionados: Sailors, twitchers and walkers.

Historical interest: A haunt of Nelson's boyhood (he was born in 1758 in nearby Burnham Thorpe) and little has changed since. The high-water mark of the devastating 1978 flood is painted on the wall of Peter Beck's Boathouse.

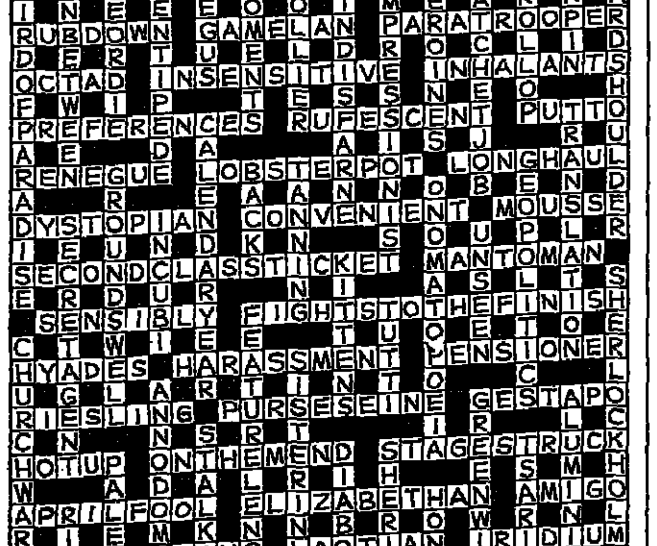
Time of the day/time of year to visit: Summer evenings, of course, but winter days, too — the biting wind can be bracing.

OS reference: *845 443 (Landranger 132).*

Also nearby: The Lifeboat pub at Thornham and the Crown at Stanhoe. Plus: Gurney's fishmongers at Burnham Market and Brancaster, and Yetman's restaurant in Holt.

PETER BROOKES

EASTER JUMBO ANSWERS



The six winners of the Easter Jumbo Crossword (Weekend, March 29), who will each receive £100, are: T. Boon of Ware, Hertfordshire; P. Clegg of Cambridge; B. Gatley of Manchester; R. Morris of Middlesbrough; M. Rupp of Canterbury, Kent; D. Thyer of Llanyravon, Cwmbran, Gwent.

Spring songsters fly in

FEATHER REPORT

THIS WEEKEND the spring migration is at its height. Already chiffchaffs, blackcaps, willow warblers and sedge warblers have spread across the British Isles and are singing lustily in their newly reclaimed territories. The warm, stable weather has encouraged them, and the first chiffchaffs arrived very early — many of them were back from the Mediterranean before mid-March.

At the beginning of this month there was a lull in chiffchaff movement, perhaps because of cool north winds that they were reluctant to fly into, but last week they were pouring into Britain again. I heard one singing in the Luxembourg Gardens in Paris ten days ago. Perhaps it was about to set off for the Princes Street Gardens in Edinburgh.

Blackcaps were also early this year — I heard my first one singing on March 31 as it chased flies in a sallow bush — and there have been many reports of early swallows.

Now the habitually later arrivals are coming in — the nightingales and tree pipits, the reed warblers and whitethroats. Cuckoos are also appearing. One should be cautious, however, of reports of cuckoos. The collared dove, which invaded Britain from the Balkans 40 years ago and is now a common resident, has a triple "coo-coo-coo" call (with an emphasis on the middle syllable), and is often mistaken for the *Cuculus canorus* that "singeth as she flies". (But the old song, though charming, is also wrong, since it is the male cuckoo that calls: the female has a quite different bubbling note.)

Among the small passerine species, males almost invariably come first and stake out their territories in the kind of habitat they prefer. The earlier they come, the more chance they have of seizing a territory with the right kind of cover for their nest and adequate food supplies. But if they arrive too early they may starve because there are not enough insects out and about. As with practically everything else in nature, it is getting the balance right that counts.

The female birds arrive on average ten or 14 days later than the males. Like the males, they return to the area they were born in or nested in the previous year, and the older birds may sometimes pair up with their previous mate. However, it is the females who go around choosing, and the males woo them with the vigour of their songs and displays. It is a real marriage market, and the females instinctively choose the mate and the territory that they think will serve them best. As for fidelity afterwards, that we now know is another matter...

PETER BROWN

A chance visitor, the garganey, prefers to nest by floodwater

Over the whole of Europe and Asia, it has been estimated that there are two to three billion bird visitors from Africa every summer. Perhaps double that number leave for Africa again every autumn, after the breeding season, and half of those die before the flight back again next spring. The commonest visitor to Europe is the willow warbler, with something like 200 million breeding pairs in the birch woods and copses and spinneys from St Petersburg to Co Cork. Yet we do not see many of them on the wing. These great waves of birds move inconspicuously up from the south, often flying by night or in the first hours of the morning, and pausing to rest and feed after each stage.

SOME SUMMER visitors that are common to the east or south of Britain stray off their route or overshoot the mark, and cause some excitement when they are seen on these shores. Already a few hoopoes have been recorded this year, plodding about on garden lawns or flying up like enormous, striped, pink butterflies.

Wrynecks used to be common in Britain but now this country is right at the edge of their range, and only a few turn up each spring. Look at every nuthatch you hear calling, and one of them might turn out to be a brown, twisty-headed wryneck — as happened very agreeably to me one April a few years back.

Last week I saw another of these chance arrivals, a garganey. This is a duck which appears here in small numbers in early spring, with a handful of pairs staying to breed by quiet floodwaters. This year the warm weather seems to have brought more in, but probably fewer will nest because of the drought.

The drake is unmistakable. The one I saw was standing among some reeds with only its head showing, but it was impossible to mistake the long, creamy eyestripe on the pinkish-brown head. Then it came out and dabbled on the water with some teal.

It is sometimes called a "cricket teal" but this is not because it comes here for the sport. The name represents the drake's odd spring call, which I heard my bird making several times — a kind of dry trill, or ratcheting sound, unlike anything I had heard coming from that Hertfordshire lake before.

DERWENT MAY

● **What's about:** *Birders — watch out for housemartins over water. Twitchers — white stalk, Hampstead Heath; great-winged teal, Stiffkey, Norfolk; hoopoe, Church Norton, West Sussex. Details from Birdline, 0891 700222. Calls cost 40p a min cheap rate, 50p other times.*

Daily fishing, burials extra

The high cost of a traditional funeral is persuading New Yorkers to bury their dead at sea, says **Lois Letts**

NEPTUNE SOCIETY

Emanuel Weintraub (right), founder of the Neptune Society, watches as a mourner scatters ashes. Sea burials cost £720 compared with about £2,650 on land

Jessica Mitford would have approved and so would Evelyn Waugh. The high cost of funerals *in America, first exposed in The American Way of Death* and *The Loved One*, is being rejected by a growing number of our transatlantic neighbours for cheaper, do-it-yourself alternatives. And among New Yorkers, burial at sea is proving popular.

In response to the demand, Long Island boatmen with *gnarled hands more used to* gutting fish than scattering ashes have started up lucrative sidelines in the burial business. *Doug Aries, who runs* Captain Doug's Burials at Sea from the Nautical Mile at Freeport, is typical of the new aquatic entrepreneur.

"I started doing funerals about eight years ago, as a sideline to my fishing," he says, standing proudly next to the 72ft barnacle-encrusted *Captain Doug* on a windy *spring* day. *"The first one* came about by accident. A fleet of Mercedes-Benz drew up and about 20 Chinese mourners got out. *They were carrying* a man's ashes and asked to be taken to Far Rockaway, a local landmark, so they could scatter them. They gave the guy a traditional Oriental service on board — burning money, scattering flowers and throwing a dead chicken into the water. I charged them $500 [£330]."

Emboldened by that first success, Mr Aries, 36, decided to enter the business in earnest. He now advertises in *The Yellow Pages*. He wears tar-stained jeans and T-shirt on days when he is out fishing, but dons a suit for funerals. He loves the work: "It's serene out there, with the silent clouds, the light sand, the seagulls, the seals popping their heads out of the water. *It's a real pretty environment* to get buried in."

Economic necessity has driven many of his colleagues to follow him. Too many fishermen chasing too few fish in the Long Island area have led to local restrictions being placed on the catching of fluke, cod and haddock. About 20 fishing captains from the Freeport dock now offer funerals — either "full-body" immersions or the scattering of ashes — to supplement their incomes.

The Captain Doug has clean but basic facilities. Lavatories, painted a cheerful blue and pink, are marked "Buoys" and *"Gulls"*. *More upmarket* is the *Lady J*, the gleaming white prow of which dominates the boats moored at Point Lookout, five miles from Freeport. "Burials are a sideline to my party business," *says the boat's owner*, Captain Pat Focazio, who performs up to 40 funerals a year. Many are in the summer but Captain *Focazio will take the boat out* in most weathers: "If it's too rough we'll postpone. I don't want to kill anyone."

Immigrants from all over America come to Captain Focazio to have their beloved's ashes scattered on the *north*-eastern seaboard, close to where they first set foot in the Land of the Free. Captain Focazio *is able to dominate* business in the Freeport area because of his partnership with the Neptune Society (motto: Simplicity, Dignity, Economy), which has cornered the market in sea burials since the 1970s. *Joan* Kiernan of the New York branch of the society says it is vital to use a man who understands local weather conditions.

"If you have the wind blowing *from the wrong direction* and you're disseminating [dropping the ashes into the ocean], those ashes will blow straight back into the boat and all over the mourners. We like to conduct a dignified ceremony for the benefit of those who are left behind." A Neptune Society funeral service includes scattered carnations (or roses for extra) and the recitation of prayers, psalms and poems. It usually takes place after 5pm, when Captain *Focazio returns from his day's* fishing.

The society offers its *members* a prepayable VIP service at $1,090 (£720) which includes removal of the body from hospital, transport to the crematorium, organising the death certificate and scattering at sea. A formal boat service costs an additional $595 (£390), but a cheaper option is to split the service with *another family for $350 (£230)* each. And for the bargain price of $100 (£66), Captain Focazio will scatter ashes without a service, known as "informal dissemination".

"The ashes are sent in to us," Ms Kiernan says. "We wait till we have at least ten urns. Then Captain Focazio scatters them, one after another, when he's *out on the ocean."* Neptune Society members appreciate the "naturalness" of an ocean scattering, and the low costs.

Full-body burials, which are less common these days, are governed by stiffer rules. Coffins have to be made of stainless steel and weighted down so they will sink quickly and permanently to the bottom. Captain Focazio feels a little odd *performing this type* of ritual: "You have to go 65 miles out to 600ft of water and you feel like you're drowning *someone — though once* you've done a couple it gets a little easier."

Captain Mike Maresca, 76, an old-timer among the Freeport fleet, had an unfortunate experience with a full-body burial a few years back. He took out his boat, *The Norseman*, with a coffin and mourners for a service: "The casket arrived with holes drilled in it and weighted down so it would sink. So we had a little service and pushed the body over. But it didn't sink. It took *about 15 to 20 minutes before* the coffin went down. And in the meantime everyone's looking at one another and wondering what to do."

Faced with the Neptune Society's attractive rates, costs for an old-fashioned burial in a metropolitan New York cemetery are pretty steep. Rising land rates are to blame. Bonnie Tippy, director of the New York State Funeral Directors Association, reckons the average cost for traditional burial is $4,000 (£2,650). That *does not include the burial* space, the headstone or the gravediggers — typically several thousand dollars more.

The days of traditional funerals are, indeed, numbered according to Jack Springer, director of the Cremation Association of North America. About *22 per* cent of Americans choose to be cremated, but by 2010 Mr Springer expects to see the figure rise to 40 per cent. "Cremation is less expensive, it places less pressure on the environment and *it's simpler," he says. His only* problem with scattering at sea is that the family has no place to return to, no real marker.

Jerry Bracco, owner of Captain Ben's Fish Stock in Freeport, Long Island, thinks sea burial is a marvellous solution. His father, Captain Benjamin Bracco, was something of a local legend who fished from Jones Beach and pulled in 1,800kg of flounder every day. When he died, aged 65, his wishes were to be cremated and to have his *ashes sprinkled on the waves.* "I think of him now swimming with the whales," says his son. "I don't have to feel guilty about visiting the graveyard or forgetting to bring him flowers. I remember him out in the ocean where he loved what he was doing."

Choc drops for breakfast, gift-wrapped Bonio and lots of room to run about – dog-friendly hotels are booming

A five-star dog's life

NEWSTEAM

Jeremy Seal and Stanley at the Lygon Arms, Broadway

Stanley clearly approved of the Lygon Arms in the Cotswold town of Broadway. Our Welsh springer spaniel hardly had time to slaver over the tray of goodies left out for him in the room — a Bonio mountain, choc drops and a tin of Pedigree Chum for later — than a nice man knocked on the door to take him for a walk around the grounds while his owners settled in.

In time, he would have open fires to lie by, bags of adoring, internationally accented attention and even a helipad to exercise on in the morning. A five-star dog's life he thought, as another fabulous, tummy tickle came his way.

The famously canine-friendly Lygon Arms is not alone. More dogs than ever are being encouraged to take their owners on holiday rather than end up alone in jug — sorry, kennels. "We welcome dogs and well behaved owners" might well make heartless dognostics cringe, but is typical of the advertisements in *Pets Welcome! 1997*, a guide to dog-friendly accommodation which now attracts almost 1,050 hotels, guest houses and self-catering units in Britain and Ireland, an increase of 100 establishments on 1996.

Overnighting in the back of a chilly car while their owners enjoy themselves indoors simply isn't an acceptable option any longer. Over Christmas, the Savoy-owned Lygon Arms had 23 dog guests. "We are a smart hotel, but we are also a pub," says the managing director, Kirk Ritchie. "Dogs are an essential part of the Lygon atmosphere and we find that complaints about dogs are extremely rare."

The house rule is simple, as at most other establishments, no dogs in the restaurant. Stanley could live with that. While we dined, we left *him in the room to sleep off a surfeit* of casually slipped peanuts that he had garnered in the bar.

In nearby Bourton-on-the-Water, Julian Davies at the Chester House Hotel has the only dog-friendly establishment in town. He is sure his dog policy makes commercial sense. "This morning, I had a phone call from an elderly couple who couldn't consider staying in a hotel unless they could take a dog. It's guaranteed extra business."

Even so, Mr Davies concedes that some guests take canine care to a bewildering degree. "I often have people looking after the dog in the room while their other halves eat alone in the restaurant," he says pityingly.

Although an increasing number *of hotels accept dogs, terms vary* enormously and should always be checked. Some, like the Bath Spa Hotel, can provide baskets and food. Others, including Stapleford Park near Melton Mowbray, do not permit dogs to be left alone in the rooms. But the hotel does provide a canine crèche where dogs can join Angus, the resident giant schnauzer, and dogs are greeted on arrival with a *Bonio tied in ribbon*.

But don't just turn up because hotels insist on being forewarned of dog arrivals. Many hotels put guests with dogs in particular rooms. At the Bath Spa Hotel, these are on the ground floor, allowing access to the seven-acre grounds. *Many other hotels have resident* dogs such as Duma, the black labrador at Lewtrenchard Manor near Okehampton, and like to know *the company their dog can expect.*

Most dog-friendly hotels accept that guests may include dog-allergic humans. "People sometimes insist on a dog-free room," Mr Davies says. "In which case, we can assure them there won't have been a dog in the room for at least two weeks before their arrival." Marjorie Titchens at White Topps Hotel in Bournemouth is the exception, taking humans only if they are accompanied by a dog.

"The important guest is the dog," she says. "But we have to look after the owner or the dog's not happy." White Topps has seven bedrooms and a downstairs area for arthritic dogs. The reasoning behind her canine exclusivity is simple. "We love dogs," she says. "But we think dog owners tend to be nicer people. *They don't moan about the weather* because they have to take their dogs out in rain or shine."

Dog-friendly accommodation has always been a far tougher proposition in London. Now Orion Hotels, a French chain specialising in serviced apartment hotels, which opened the Orion Barbican in 1994, is planning two more hotels for London launch later this year, so *setting an example to all those dog*-hating hoteliers in the capital. "The French can't live without their dogs," says Orion's Valerie Dhieux. "We couldn't *imagine* a hotel that didn't allow dogs." So much for the Brits being a nation of dog lovers.

JEREMY SEAL

- *Stanley stayed at the Lygon Arms, Broadway, Worcs (01386 852255) and at Chester House Hotel, Bourton-on-the-Water, Glos (01451 820471). Prices for double rooms including breakfast start from £155 at the Lygon Arms and from £69 at Chester House. Dogs stay free.*
- Pets Welcome! 1997, *FHG Publications, £4.60.*

Shandy loves children

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A VET WRITES

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If a free-living cat is given an inadequate diet he'll solve his nutritional problems by catching and eating birds, mice, rabbits or even frogs.

Cats are great survivors but it's better to make sure by buying one of the "big brand name" cat foods.

JAMES ALLCOCK

- *Write to The Times Vet, Weekend,* The Times, *1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. Advice is offered without legal responsibility. No correspondence can be entered into.*

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'I can see the point of the country in the summer but a wintry landscape in England is even more depressing than a Bergman film'

Why rural life is another country

LIFE AND SOUL

GINNY DOUGARY

I held hands with a crusty over Easter. He even looked a bit like Swampy, the nation's new heart-throb, with his untroubled blue eyes and sweet expression. One moment I was looking at him and his friends across a crowded dance floor, thinking that actually I rather liked the way they all wore their hair in those elaborate matted pompadours, the dusty dreadlocks piled high, and wondering in that sort of vague mid-life way you do whether I should investigate the possibility of getting some hair extensions ("I'd like a 'Swampy', please").

The next moment, I was in a giant chain, conga-ing in and out of barns and gazing up at Hale-Bopp in a neon-free sky, with the young crusty on one side and an elderly woman in horn-rimmed spectacles and *Come Dancing* shoes on the other. Ah, I thought for one weak and sentimental moment, so this is what living in the country is all about.

Well, of course, it both is and is not. By which I mean that, yes, one does get the most unhomogeneous and unlikely combinations of people — urban refugees and members of the Women's Institute, born-again punks trying to look disaffected and weekend Morris dancers with beards, woolly socks and sandals — gathering for the Little Mimsford Film Society or the Bosnian Relief klezmer evening or madrigals or whatever, quite frankly, is on offer.

But this has less to do with a deep-seated sense of community than with the fact that you have less choice about whom you rub shoulders with in the country than in the city. While this may sometimes be a good thing — giving the impression that country folk are a deeply harmonious and tolerant lot, which anyone who listens to *The Archers* knows to be a fallacy — the thought of seeing the same assortment of people, however varied the tribal differences, wherever I went would drive me round the bend. Metropolitan living, whatever its downside, does at least guarantee a certain degree of anonymity.

We are, I'm embarrassed to say, in danger of turning into sad people who go to the same place for their holidays every year. For the past two or three years, at any rate, we have spent Easter in a pair of converted barns in the sort of village where the postman marries the dentist. We go with another couple from London and their two daughters, and hang out with our friends who live down the lane in a cottage which is perfectly formed but too small to house all of us.

Our children play with the three boys who live on the farm — hide-and-seek in the haystacks, feeding the rabbits, collecting the warm freckled eggs from the chicken hutch, and hoarding the spent red, blue and green cartridges in the fields, bright debris from the pheasant shoots. This is our younger son's idea of heaven. For some years now, he has been in training to become a member of the squirearchy — with our garden as his domain. He insists on wearing wellingtons, even at the height of summer, to stride around inspecting the holes he has dug and what he refers to rather grandly as his "worm farm". The country for him is like a wild and wonderfully expansive version of our back garden.

There is a comforting uniformity to the week. Every night is a party. Every morning is a late start. We always play charades. We always visit a wonderful café over the Welsh Border which calls itself The Hat Shop. And we always ask each other, at least once, "So do you think you could ever live in the country?"

It is a question that has become more pressing as the years go by — since every six months or so, friends who we had thought were irredeemable townies move out of London in search of fresh air, good schools and a rather airy fairy notion of the pastoral idyll. This exodus, it seems to me, is tinged with a Proustian longing to recapture the golden lost moments of their own childhood. My best friend has moved back to the village she grew up in. Another girlfriend fantasises from her South London Victorian terrace about becoming the heroine of *My Little Pony*, with a dash of Jilly Cooper sex 'n' dressage.

My answer to the question, however, remains a heartfelt "No". Cottages make me feel claustrophobic. I am quite impervious to the charms of the Aga. And I have no desire to spend my days as a taxi driver, ferrying my children huge distances hither and thither across the countryside. And while one can begin to see the point of the country in the summer months, a wintry English landscape is more depressing than a Bergman film. On balance, I think I'd rather slash my wrists in the city.

Not under our roof you won't

The dilemma of whether teenage children should sleep with their lover in your house

JOHN PAUL

Louisa Kershaw, right, with her mother Kathy: "She said I could sleep with my boyfriend at home as long as I behaved responsibly"

There was one job we did almost as soon as we moved into our last house, where a country solicitor and his wife had brought up three children. It was to paint the attic bedroom where "Always Use a Condom" had been written in large letters over the bed.

The couple showing us round never mentioned it. They were apologetic about the vast drawing room, made shabby by their son's impromptu rugby games, but the scrums in the attic obviously didn't worry them at all. The words on the wall could mean only one thing. Their children had been allowed to sleep with their partners under their parents' roof. For this family it was no big deal. Others find it more of a problem.

A couple of years ago, when she was 16, Louisa Kershaw asked her mother how she would feel about her sleeping with a boyfriend at home. "She said it would be fine by her as long as I was responsible about safety. I wasn't really surprised, but I was glad. It meant she trusted me," says Louisa, who is now reading biomedical sciences at university. "Most of my friends have parents saying 'not under our roof'. Some of them go and do things just to spite them."

Although she has had serious relationships, Louisa hasn't yet taken her mother up on the offer of bed and breakfast for two at their home in Scotland. "I'm not sure when I will," she laughs, "but it's good to know I have the chance."

Her mother Kathy, who applied the same rule to Louisa's two older brothers, believes young people need safety and choice in sexual matters. "Letting her know that it would be fine by me if she brought someone home is my way of helping with that. I would like her to be doing what she feels she needs to be doing without peer pressure or parental pressure.

"I really value being able to talk to my children and to have a more open relationship than I had with my parents. Some people may see it as encouraging her to become promiscuous, but if anything openness encourages young people to explore feelings and relationships without rushing in." Miss Kershaw is a freelance "group facilitator" running personal development courses for groups such as the Workers' Educational Association. She is also the Highlands co-ordinator for Parent Network, which holds parenting courses nationwide. Sex "under our roof" is just the sort of topic which comes up.

> Saying no to sex in the house simply means it will happen elsewhere

The topic came up for John and his wife Claire, who both teach in a Dorset secondary school. They have four children, boys and girls aged between 20 and eight. They also have a united front against sex at home. "We have more or less said no from the beginning and they have accepted it very well. It wasn't something we planned. Circumstances almost overwhelm you and you find you have to make a decision," John says.

"It's very much something to do with the younger ones. Sex is something you want them to grow up into and not be forced to confront too early. If they see a standard being set further up the line, they soon think 'It's my turn now'. And that's bad for them.

"The argument that home is the safest place never concerned us at all. They were mobile, and there were places they could go. They could always find an opportunity elsewhere." The couple have a friend who takes morning tea in bed to her sons and their girlfriends.

Alison Hadley, of the Brook Advisory Service, which offers contraception and sexual counselling for young people, says that parents have to realise that saying no to sex in the house simply means it will happen somewhere else. "It's fine to have your own rules, as long as you have thought about the consequences. If you say yes because you'd rather they had a decent environment rather than a car or a park, you might also say 'one day a week' or 'at the weekend' or 'not while it might interfere with your schoolwork'.

"If you say no, you have to realise that they may go somewhere less conducive to a good and safe sexual relationship. Those who say no sometimes simply don't want to know their children are having sex. Some say no and insist on separate rooms, but expect it to happen anyway.

Gael Lindenfield remembers how saying yes to her daughter changed the mother-child relationship. She is a psychotherapist and author of *Confident Children* (Thorsons, £5.99). "It was a milestone. I knew they were sleeping together and I said: 'You know, you can bring James home and you can sleep here together if you want to.' Our whole relationship changed. And that's something people can be frightened of. It moves things to an adult-to-adult footing. And a young person bringing a partner home is often signalling that their relationship has become a serious commitment.

She says: "Like a lot of teenage problems, sex at home really shows up the cracks in a family not used to being upfront and coping with dilemmas. Sometimes saying no is a matter of power. Sometimes it's a matter of what the neighbours will think. There must be more of this now because children are living at home with their parents for longer, because they can't afford to move into a place of their own."

Sian and Roger, parents of two teenage girls, are prepared to say yes to their elder daughter, who is 17. "She hasn't actually asked yet." Sian says. "And I'm not sure if it's ever happened under our roof. To say no would be to admit to having a bit of a hang-up about sex myself, I think. At the same time, her bedroom is directly over ours and I wouldn't want to hear them at it."

Roger, an engineer, knows it's okay by him, because he recently came to terms with what he thought was his daughter's lesbianism. He spotted her in the early hours of the morning partly-clothed and asleep on the sofa with what seemed to be the short-haired female friend she'd gone out with that evening. He quietly turned off the gas fire and tip-toed back to bed. "I was surprised," he said. "But over the next couple of days I reasoned it out and accepted it with no particular angst. Fine." He then discovered the short-haired sofa snoozer was an ex-boyfriend being given a second — shortlived — trial.

Teenage sex is obviously tricky, but in some houses it doesn't stop there. Hazel is 27. She's a solicitor and lives with her partner in Manchester. "There is no way that we could visit my parents as a couple for the weekend," she says, "so I go alone. They simply are incredibly old-fashioned. It's not a religious thing. It's their morality, which is rigid.

"They won't come to see us because we're not married and they won't even talk about it. Their behaviour is so unreasonable I'm not sure how much longer I can go on visiting them and sleeping in my childhood bed. And yet in a way I feel sorry for them, because if they won't admit that sex is okay for me at 27, what does that say about their relationship?"

JILL PARKIN

Ruth Gledhill joins a carnival atmosphere with children at Salisbury Cathedral

Jolly japes with the Archbishop

THE CLOWN, a red-faced priest called Roly, was doing a thing of which I could only dream. With a feather duster and a shocking Shakespearean licence, he polished the Archbishop of Canterbury's shining pate with an energy that must have left the few hairs remaining there thoroughly vanquished.

Along with the thousand-plus children present, we watched Dr George Carey closely for any sign of godly, archiespiscopal wrath. There was none. And it could have been my imagination, but as the spring sunshine filtered through the diamond lights of Salisbury cathedral, a faint halo appeared instead, reflected from the gleam.

Dr Carey was nearing the end of a three-day flying visit to the Salisbury diocese. Hopping in and out of a helicopter, he preached in the cathedral, in Bradford-on-Avon and in Poole. He was interviewed by young people in an event billed as "Dr Carey Unplugged" at Poole arts centre and lunched with parishioners in rural Wiltshire and Dorset. We caught up with him at a service for schools in the cathedral, where the contrast between this and my last occasion there, for a candlelit mass attended by numerous bishops and dignitaries and with the choir robed in all its splendour, could not have been greater.

Children were everywhere. They sat in corners, beside tombs, on flagstones and stone benches, around the purbeck marble columns. Anyone in a mitre was mobbed by infants demanding autographs. Rising from their midst was the Archbishop, seated on a temporary throne on a platform in the centre of the nave.

Children from Dorset's Emmanuel school performed a dance, robed as yellow and orange pentecostal flames. A hushed silence descended before wild applause, and then it was time for the Archbishop to be "hotseated". Television producer Joe Fisher ran from one end of the nave to the other with a microphone, inviting the infants to challenge Dr Carey. Roly, one of the church's devout band of "Holy Fools", qualified clowns who are also ordained, ran around cracking jokes and making trouble.

First into the fray was blonde, angelic Kimberley: "How did you get to be Archbishop and did you have any doubts about accepting?" she asked. "I got a letter from the Prime Minister," he said, in the same tone of voice that I use when reporting receipt of my Visa bill to my husband. "I was Bishop of Bath and Wells at the time," he added, by way of explanation. And yes, he did have doubts, but took the job because he had never run away from a challenge.

Melissa asked the most intelligent question: "Are you going to change anything about the church to make it more interesting?" Yes, he said, but she and all young people must help him work out how. A boy called Andrew asked him what his family thought about his promotion. "I don't know about my wife but some members of my family were quite worried about it," he confessed.

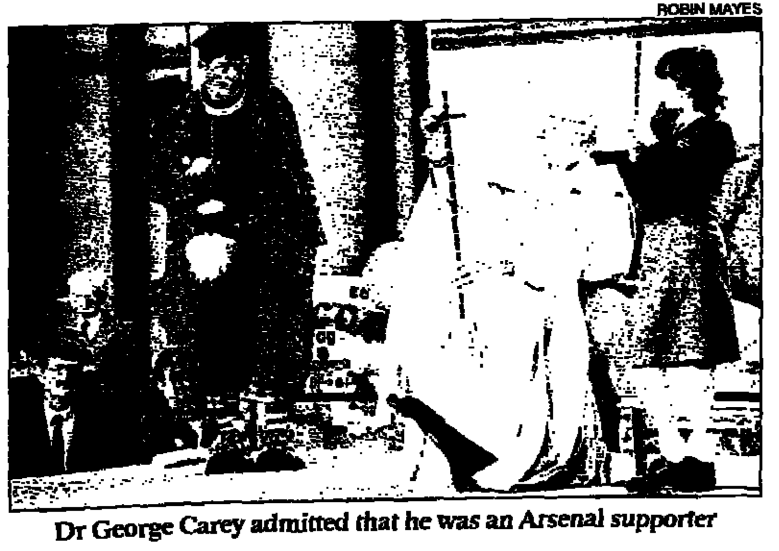
Peter asked him what he liked best about his job, to which for some reason he said: "My favourite team is Arsenal." This was a hugely popular or unpopular response, depending on which end of the nave you happened to be seated at. Terrace-style chaos threatened, and something that sounded like a football chant but could have been a hymn drifted up from the west end.

After that, the mood of the terraces never quite left us. Our MC, a retired priest, Canon David Slater, in an elfin green cassock, leapt onto the platform and launched us into the Top Ten popular hymns. *Seek ye first the Kingdom of God*, we sang, and *Lord of the Dance*, and the beautiful *Father, we adore you*. Before I knew it, we were into *Shine, Jesus, Shine*, and we were hoarse.

At last, we were blessed by the Bishop of Salisbury, the Right Rev David Stancliffe, and there was a chance to meet the Archbishop as he wandered around the cathedral, crowds of knee-high infants in waves around him. I made a beeline for William Hill, to place a bet on Arsenal winning the Premier League.

- *Salisbury Cathedral, 6 The Close, Salisbury, Wilts SP1 2EF (01722 328726).*

ROBIN MAYES



Dr George Carey admitted that he was an Arsenal supporter

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Our politicians have always had their dark — and foolish — side

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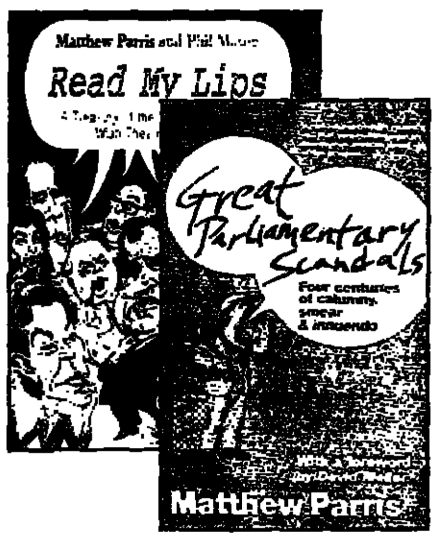
Parliamentary sleaze and political gaffes have dominated the first few weeks of the 1997 general election campaign as Matthew Parris, *Times* political sketchwriter and former Tory MP, reveals in his books *Great Parliamentary Scandals* and *Read My Lips*.

Newly-updated to cover the Major years, *Great Parliamentary Scandals* ranges from the Victorian Prime Minister who brought prostitutes into Downing Street to the MP caught red-cheeked in the House of Commons showers; from the sale of peerages for cash to shady share dealings in the newly-invented wireless. Along the way, it exposes a number of politicians whose activities — until now — have escaped attention.

Taking a look at the funny side of politics, *Read My Lips* is a treasury of U-turns, verbal blunders and mistaken predictions. "How nice to see you all here", Roy Jenkins told prisoners in a London jail. "The British won't fight," Argentine leader Leopoldo Galtieri said shortly before the Falklands war. Tony Blair, John Major, Bill Clinton and Winston Churchill are among the politicians caught out in a comic collection able to make even the most cynical MP blush.

Both books are available to *Times* readers for £2 off their cover prices, plus free postage and packing. To order your copy of *Great Parliamentary Scandals* at £8.99 or *Read My Lips* at £12.95, send coupon and remittance to the address below or telephone the 24-hour credit card phone-line.



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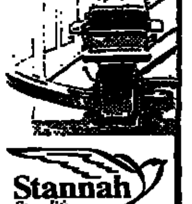

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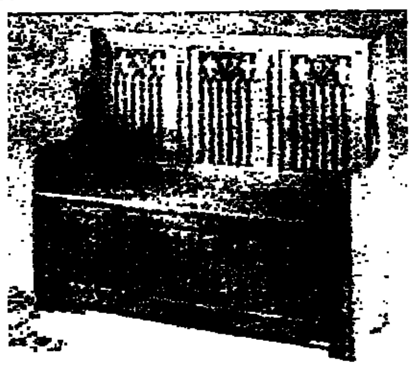

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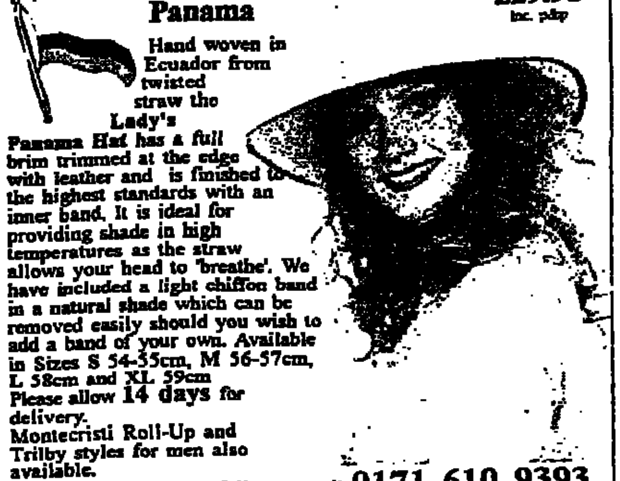

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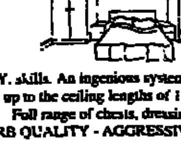

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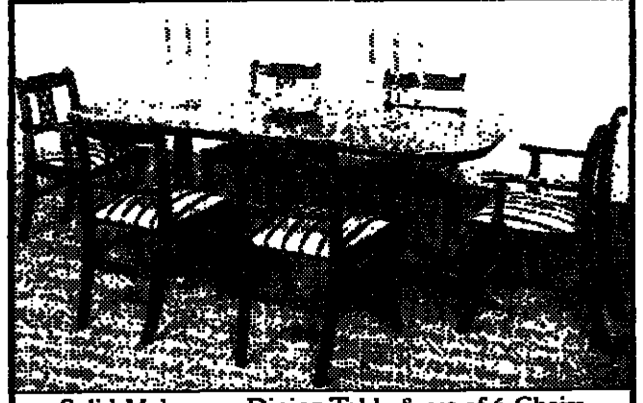

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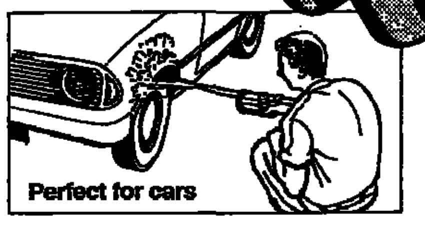

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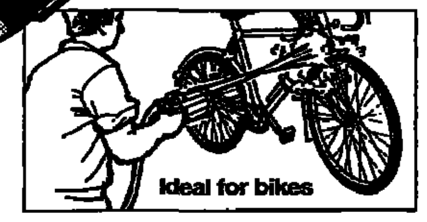

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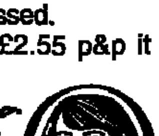

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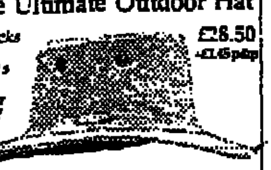

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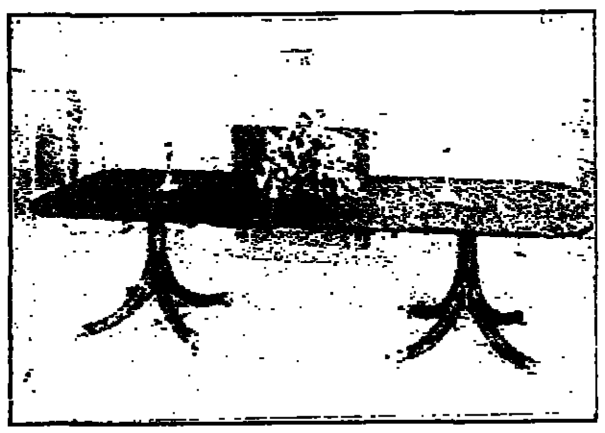

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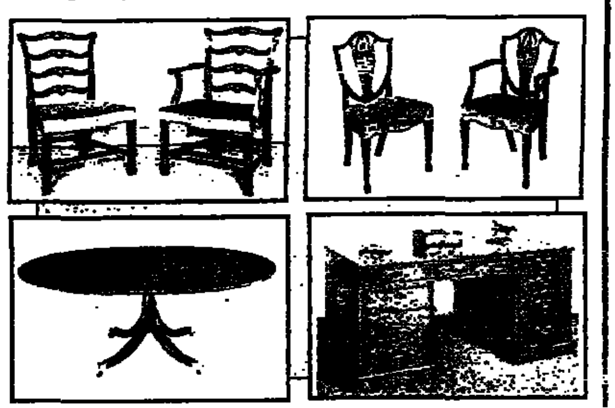

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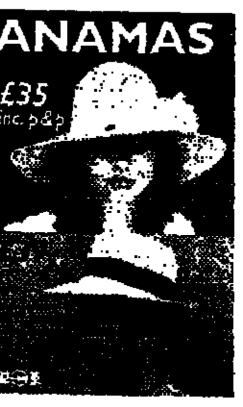

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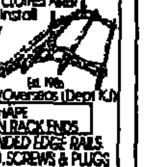

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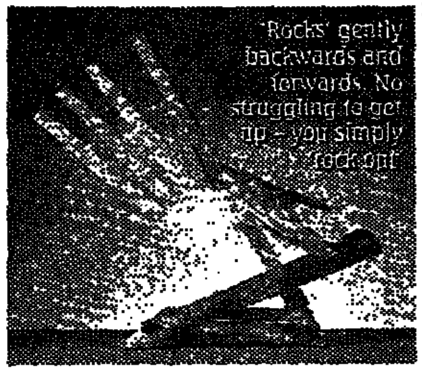
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LADIES

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LADIES

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RATHER special, pretty, slender divorcee; mid-50's, gentle, thoughtful and caring personality with lots of interests - especially the Arts and countryside: seeks similar male. West Country/Anywhere. Please Reply to Box No 4490 ✍

RETIRING this year? So am I. Affectionate professional female seeks company of similar caring male with whom to enjoy life particularly travel. Live NW Kent. Box No 4239 ✍

RICHMOND to Runnymede, Kew to Denham (all TW/UB postcodes) seeking that special person? let us help. Call Linda at Elite 0181 580 0028: 7 days

ROMAN CATHOLIC early 40s, prof woman. Tall, celtic, warm hearted, sincere and comfortably relaxed about life. Enjoys good conversation, food/wine, country walks, film/theatre. Seeks similiar man who isn't afraid of a few wrinkles! London/Surrey Reply Box 4463 ☎ ✍

SATURDAY RENDEZVOUS

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LADIES

STRAWBERRY blonde, slim, solvent Scorpio WLTM tall, tactile charmer, N/S, GSOH, under 60. Love laughing, the outdoors, theatre, etc. Wilts based. Photo please. ALA. Box No 4447 ✍

STYLISH slim attractive woman seeks friendship well presented youthful 60+, 5'9"+, cultured, prof man/grad. West/ Home Counties. Box 4241 ✍

SUPER personality, attractive, 40s, 5ft 5ins, brown hair, green eyes, medium build, educated, long term widow, super business lady (with brain), loving WLTM truly outstanding male soulmate (unattached) with breadth and achievement, thoughtful, humorous, kind, decidedly solvent, for unwinding, relaxing, caring and sharing life's enjoyments. Berks area. Please write. Photo much appreciated. Box No 4201 ✍

TALL, beautiful, sporty, well spoken, outgoing girl needs a quietly, wealthy, equivalent boy, 45-55. Loves tennis, London, entertaining, events, log fires, good food & country pubs. Box No 4373

TALL, slim, pretty graduate, Chinese lady, 28, 5'9", London seeks kind, witty prof man 30-45. Photo to Box No 4272 ✍

TWO gorgeous quality brunettes (business consultant & university lecturer), petite, athletic, warm. Seek pair of unattached well educated, fun loving gentleman (28-35) for friendship/ fun. Cambs. based. Reply with background, interests & photo please to Box No 4493 ✍

UNPRETENTIOUS, slim, blonde beauty, 30's looking to restore equilibrium & WLTM extraordinary man 35-48 with integrity + other qualities - lover of the countryside, likes & understands children & family values, in tune with himself & others, spontaneous, loving & romantic but also vibrant, exciting & SOH would help. London/ Southeast/ anywhere. Reply with photo to Box 4158 ✍

VERY tall, classy prof woman (28) who is slim, fit, attractive, loving, honest, romantic, lots of fun and wondering why she is advertising, seeks confident, solvent, businessman to put the twinkle in her eyes. Are you him? North West/willing to travel. Photo plse Box 4454 ☎ ✍

WANTED: Grownup male 35-55 affluent & successful, tall with active career, educated, interesting, cultured, gregarious. E Anglia/London for lady early 40's financially independent, slim, attractive, who likes fast cars, champagne & strawberry lifestyle. Reply to Box 4497 ✍

WELL travelled attractive, early 30s, sporty/outdoor girl, WLTM intelligent, attractive prof n/s man 30-40 with simillar interests. Solent/South Plse reply with photo to Box 4467 ☎ ✍

WE provide the date, you provide the personality. E.C. Introductions for winners

WOMAN of depth, integrity and character who, whilst acquiring natural warmth, grace and charm, also believes beauty on the outside can only be matched by beauty on the inside - seeks her best friend. A man of strength, substance, kindness, loyalty and humour. Self sufficent yet looking for that special person with who he can connect and enrich his life. You will not be disappointed. I am in my early thirties, beautiful, happy and value life, love and relationships yet still looking for that special someone - so rare - with whom to share. WTTM, Midlands/ Anywhere. Reply Box No 4279 ✍

YORKSHIRE Humberside 100's of lovely ladies Elite Intros Freecall 0500 525240

ZZZzzz Wake up! Close Encounters is open Saturday & Sunday Call free 0800 141 141

MIGHT there be a lonely, personable, humorous, educated, active widower, possibly ex-RN, who WLTM a charming, attractive, discerning, caring cosmopolitan lady widow, early 50's, Surrey based. Recent photo appreciated. All replies answered. (voice msg.) (Box no 4226) ✍

NOT - quite - Francesca Annis seeks Knight of love for life. Sussex/London Box 4247 ☎ ✍

NOTTS/Leics/Lincs Success after success for gentlemen. Elite got closer – Call now for free details 0115 937 6104

OPTIMISTIC mid 40's going on 18, dark hair & vivacious, adores attention. Seeking soulmate 45-60, for friendship perhaps further developments while pursuing mutual interests (theatre, opera, sailing, travel, life). Central London. Photo please to Box No 4303 ☎ ✍

POSITIVE thinker, slim prof grad WLTM male mid 30's/40s to share love of life, children, arts, travel, outdoors & dry SOH. London M25/M40. Photo apprec. Reply to Box No 4297 ✍

RETIRING this year? So am I. Affectionate professional female seeks company of similar caring male with whom to enjoy life particularly travel. Live NW Kent. Box No 4239 ✍

SATURDAY RENDEZVOUS

THE TIMES cannot guarantee that respondents will receive a reply when answering advertisements on this page, although we hope that as a matter of courtesy they will. When making contact with people for the first time it is advisable to meet in a public place and let a member of your family or a trusted friend know where you will be. We would advise readers and advertisers to exercise caution when giving out personal details. This will be respected by genuine respondents.

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LADIES

RICHMOND to Runnymede, Kew to Denham (all TW/UB postcodes) seeking that special person? let us help. Call Linda at Elite 0181 580 0028: 7 days

ROMANTIC (incurably so), Mediterranean female, slim, considered attractive surrounded by love but lacking someone special. I love classical music/ opera, theatre, walking WLTM prof kind caring 50ish man. London based. Reply Box 4306 ☎ ✍

SHY Oxfordshire divorcee, 46, seeks nice man under 60 to look after her. Box No 4149 ✍

SINCERE, caring lady, late 40s, based North Surrey seeks n/s, cultured, humorous male companion in 50s to share love of theatre, arts and nature. Photo plse Close Encounters Bx 4246

SPORTY coupe 'F' model, garaged, Kent/London, 1950's vintage, likes to park at restaurants, golf clubs, antique shops. Seeks good looking, N/S 'M' model with GSOH & FSH. Send photo & tel no to Box No 4300 ✍

STYLISH Australian Lady, 50, visiting London July-August, seeking the perfect English Gentleman for social outings / friendship. Please reply with photo and letter to Box No 4207

SURREY (KT/TW/GU) Gentlemen! for choices call Mike Close Encounters 01932 783165

TRADITIONAL values, caring, attractive, divorced lady, Kent based, fair haired & blue eyes. Interests: arts, countryside, entertaining, homelife, travel (especially off the beaten track), fun to be with. WLTM tall prof business gentleman, N/S. 50-60 who like myself, won't be satisfied with second best. Easy going & willing to take chances for a sincere, honest & loving relationship. Photo please to Box No 4206 ✍

SATURDAY RENDEZVOUS

GENTLEMEN

ARTICULATE, warm, loving, good looking Englishman, 43, ready to share his life and make that ultimate partnership with a lovely, petite and slim woman. Ideally she will have a kind, loving, sincere & earthy personality Nationality unimportant Plse contact me with recent photo/phone number mine by return Home Counties Bx 4392 ☎ ✍

ARTISTIC, ok looking Oxbridge gent, bouncy & reliable with dry wit, seeks 40s-50s, well bred, lovely, laughing lady. London. Photo plse. Box 4314 ☎ ✍

BRIGHTON, Worthing, Eastbourne, H. Heath & Horsham. The Executive Club at Brighton Marina 01273 818100 E.C.

BRIGHTON & Sussex - The Executive Club at Brighton Marina 01273 818100

BRISTOL area introductions. To meet that special someone locally call Chris 0117 973 6663 Elite get closer: 7 days

CALIFORNIAN Single white male, 36, tall and good looking lawyer lives in Palm Springs, in search of very attractive lady 20's or 30's for fun, romance and possible marriage in USA. Letter & photo appreciated. Please Reply to Box No 4434 ✍

CAMBS male, 48, slim 6', varied interests seeks a mature bushy female. Reply to Box 4468 ✍

CARING relaxed loyal, gregarious, positive, optomistic, fit 6' 50 year old comfortably solvent Leo, seeks youthful unencumbered lady to share sunsets and lifes dividends Hants/ Berks/Oxon. Box No 4382 ✍

CENTRAL LONDON Single male, tall, fit, solvent, professional, active, WLTM slim attractive lady, not short 35-45, must live central London. Photo essential. Reply to Box No 4457 ✍

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GENTLEMEN

CHESHIRE Solicitor, 35, RC, tall, Irish roots, enjoys walking, golf, tennis, fresh air, red wine & sometimes lazy weekends. Seeks slim, successful lady who can also laugh at herself. Please Reply to Box No 4466 ✍

CHOOSY? So are we. The UK's top unattached join The Executive Club of St James's

COMPROMISE or stay selective? It's the people we decline that made our reputation. E.C.

SATURDAY RENDEZVOUS

GENTLEMEN

CONSULTANT Physician/Author, tall, dark haired, good looking seeks highly attractive, tall, very slim, charismatic lady with a love of life in her 30's or 40's who's interested in a fulfilling long term relationship. I'm in my early 50's, very energetic, lots of tennis, love theatre, restaurants, foreign travel & cosy evenings at home. GSOH, divorced several years, I grown up daughter, own both private clinic & house. Surrey based (nr London). Photo essential. Reply to Box No 4351 ✍

EAST LONDON/Essex Genuine ladies seeking a love for all seasons not a seasonal love. Elite Introductions freecall 0500 497775/01277 260180

EASY-GOING, tall, apparently handsome, solvent, professional with motor bike, 31, with much to offer. WLTM attractive intelligent lady for friendship/romance. Midlands-anywhere. Please reply with photo to Box No 4334 ✍

ECLECTIC, erudite, prof male, 47, tall, single, lives London & Milan seeks sensitive, positive, cosmopolitan female 32-42 able to enjoy reality as well as fantasy for mutual discovery leading to completeness and family life. Reply Box No 4400 ☎ ✍

ESHER and surrounding areas (KT postcode). Why be alone when one phone call can put you in touch with discerning ladies of like minds. Call Elite Introductions 0181 547 2577

ESSEX Elite Introductions for prof/bus people: 7 days 9am - 9pm freephone 0800 854751

GOOD looking man, young 47, 5'8, likes music, sport, books, cinema, dining out, travel WLTM n/s, slim, attractive lady 42-49 for long term relationship Kent based. Photo please. Reply to Box No 4479 ☎ ✍

SATURDAY RENDEZVOUS

GENTLEMEN

HANDSOME, 6' slim, very fit young sensitive 52, divorced, solvent prof businessman. Loves all sports and the arts as well as good restaurants and world travel. WLTM n/s lady 35+, slim, tall, striking, warm and caring. London/Surrey based. Photo Plse Box 4483 ☎ ✍

IF you would like to meet a pleasant "normal" gentleman who will treat you like a lady, then please read further. However, if you are looking for either Superman or Rambo, sorry, look elsewhere! I'm 38, tall and slim and have a wide variety of interests, in particular, I enjoy living in the countryside, walking, gardening, music and good food and wine. I'm neither looking for a super model or a Superwoman, all I want to do is meet a nice "normal" feminine lady, 28-40, living within 50 miles W. Herts with a view to a serious relationship. Please reply with a suitable letter to Box No 4355 ✍

I have recently returned from 6 months business in Miami, I am single, successful and late 30s and need to restart my social life. I am looking for someone young and attractive for wining, dining and travel. Photo would be appreciated. London/Home Counties Bx 4346 ✍

INTERNATIONAL businessman living in central London and working in the South of France, Los Angeles and Singapore is looking for that special girl to share his good life. I am free, mature and sophisticated, I love travel, theatre, restaurants and clubs. You must be outgoing and very attractive aged under 32. Photo and phone number essential please. Please Reply to Box No 4331 ✍

SATURDAY RENDEZVOUS

GENTLEMEN

NOTTS/Leics/Lincs Success after success for ladies. Elite get closer – Call now for free details 0115 937 6104

ON behalf of one of our most prestigious mature gentlemen, we are inviting contacts from ladies in E. Midlands, of good character who are seeking a serious long-term relationship. The lady to suit our client will be slim/attractive, 50-60s, active, in good health and have a zest for life. She will have flair and style and feel comfortable with meeting people. If you feel that you could be the perfect partner for our client, please send a detailed description of yourself, inc age range considered plus a recent photograph to: Wendy Roberts, Elite Introductions, 11 Clifford Hse Keyworth Notts NG12 5GZ

OXFORD Berks and Wilts Why write to one lady when Elite have 100s waiting to meet you Call 0500 003444: 7 days

PARISIAN lunch? Tall, slim, blond, London lawyer (30, n/s) seeks lively attractive lady (24-33) for Gallic gastronomy and vintage enjoyment. Please Reply to Box No 4459 ✍

PARTIES and introductions for professionals. The Executive Club of St James's estb. 1985

PLEASANT, kind, unpretentious man, 41, 5'11", slim & fit, with own hair, teeth & company, WLTM slim, N/S woman, 30+ who likes to smile. London/ Home Counties. Photo please. Reply to Box No 4234 ✍

PROFESSIONAL Businessman, Canadian, widower with 3 children (grown), active internationally, interest include tennis, music, theatre, bridge. Would like to meet lady with some similar interests. Please Reply to Box No 4336

PROFESSIONAL? Call the experts The Executive Club for the best service money can buy

RICHMOND to Runnymede, Kew to Denham (all TW/UB postcodes) seeking that special person? let us help. Call Linda at Elite 0181 580 0028: 7 days

SANE, sensitive, slim, still handsome seeks elegant, attractive 40's lady in N London/Herts. who's not always that sane! Please Reply with photo to Box No 4353 ✍

SPAIN British author, many interests but not fanatical about any of them, tall, slim & fit, divorced but still solvent, with GSOH, needs to give & receive TLC. WLTM an interesting lady who will probably be 30-45. A photograph would be appreciated. Box No 4471 ✍

TALL, slim, attractive, solvent widow of quality, 53-67, sought by cultured, well educated, male equivalent now retiring from running his own company. Southern country based. He is interested in worldwide holidays, all sports, dancing, swimming, cards, country, gardens & much more. Please Reply with photo to Box No 4482 ✍

THIS IS my Indian Summer! Business gentleman 54 seeks younger slim, N/S lady (for permanent relationship/ marriage) to persuade me to semi retire/ retire and enjoy the finer things of life, preferably in a warm comfortable climate. Sincerity and a sense of humour is important. Photo appreciated. Please Reply to Box No 4404

TREE MAN, Denbighshire, own land, 43, 6 ft, thin, English, divorced, one 13 yr daughter. Seeks bright, funny, attractive jeans/jersey/wellies female under 40, preferably living nearby. Interests: countryside, sunshine, fresh soup, strolling, laughing & pitted prunes. Photo & tel no. appreciated. Please Reply to Box No 4217 ☎ ✍

WARM, loving, good-looking & cuddly Jewish male 56 who is based in NW London seeks a similar N/S lady 46-51 for a wonderful future. Photo apprec. Box No 4164 ☎ ✍

WE have been retained by a very successful, good looking and discerning gentleman in his early forties to find for him an extremely attractive - preferably with dark hair and brown eyes, stylish and feminine partner who would fit easily into his sophisticated lifestyle whilst still retaining a love for the more simple pleasures. She must be under 35, over 5'6" tall, a non smoker with no children and an animal lover. Cotswolds based would also be preferable! Please call, Virginia, in complete confidence on 01993 824600 or write enclosing a recent photograph to : Virginia Charles The Old Brewery Burford, Oxon. OX18 4SG

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GENTLEMEN

WOULD you like to sail for 6 months in warm waters, ski in winter, enjoy walking, cooking, theatre with 6' fit & strong N/S gentleman? Are you 40-55 slim attractive adventurous lady who wants a loving long term relationship? Then we must meet. Do write with photo to Box No 3532 ✍

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ZZZzzz Wake up! Close Encounters is open Saturday & Sunday Call free 0800 141 141

MERCHANT NAVY Chief Officer, 53, divorced, presently homeless, excellent home decorator & DIY man seeks refined lady for relationship. Photo appreciated. ALA. Box No 4160 ✍

NORMAL bloke domesticated with a sense of adventure. Cares & shares, fit & slim, late forties. Likes people, fun & outdoors. Photo. Edge of N. London. Please Reply to Box No 4290 ✍

NOTTS/Leics/Lincs Success after success for ladies. Elite get closer – Call now for free details 0115 937 6104

PLEASANT, kind, unpretentious man, 41, 5'11", slim & fit, with own hair, teeth & company, WLTM slim, N/S woman, 30+ who likes to smile. London/ Home Counties. Photo please. Reply to Box No 4234 ✍

PROFESSIONAL man, 35, single, solvent; likes sport, art & travel. Seeks like minded woman 27-35. Letter + photo. London. Reply to Box No 4288 ☎ ✍

PROFESSIONAL, single, n/s (52) WLTM elegant, English Rose (35-45) whose interests include fine Arts, music, health. London/ Home Counties. Box No 4268 ✍

RECENTLY separated Mayfair businessman, N/S WLTM an attractive lady in her early 40's, N/S. Please Reply with recent photograph & tel. number to Box No 4267 ✍

RICHMOND to Runnymede, Kew to Denham (all TW/UB postcodes) seeking that special person? let us help. Call Linda at Elite 0181 580 0028: 7 days

SEPARATED professional good looking male 37 currently based in Bahamas (interest travel, triathlon, golf, tennis, diving etc). Seeks slim, attractive female (non smoker, no children), age 28-35 to help him enjoy life in the sunshine. Please write enclosing recent photo(s) to Box No 4328 ✍

SOMEWHERE, hopefully, there is a delightful, good looking, vivacious, N/S, romantic lady with a lovely smile & manner who is active & enjoys life to the full with GSOH. A little sophistication touched with elegance & style with the right chemistry will bring back that real sparkle & a new meaning into a lasting relationship full of affection & TLC. Enjoying each other's company from pillow talk to drying dishes or walking in the Lake District or walking in Sainsburys. It's the sharing that makes it all worthwhile whilst encompassing romance, music, theatre, dancing, countryside, walking, travel, the home & much more. This retired Cheshire widower, very young looking (looks fiftyish) & active in his middle sixties, slim(ish), 5'8" with a good life style would appreciate a genuine reply with a recent photo from that lovely lady allowing the sun to rise once again. Please Reply to Box No 4337 ✍

SPANISH, affectionate, sincere, honest, caring man, fit (52) & very lonely. I enjoy theatre, antiques, sports. My heart is full of love for a genuine long term relationships. Please write, you will not regret it. South Coast. Box No 4323 ☎ ✍

SUSSEX man, 42, 6'1", professional, slim, energetic, sporty (enjoys golf & squash) looking for intelligent, attractive, slender lady, 30-45. Reply with photo to Box No 4263 ✍

SWEDISH MALE 30 yrs, Blonde, Blue eyed, fun loving, wants female crew mate to sail to Caribbean Islands from June onwards. Send letter & photo to Ingvar Anderson, Munregatan 13a, 43166, Mölndal, Sweden. Tel: 00 46705141515.

TALL, dark, handsome, & incredibly solvent, GSOH, 30 year old managing director (London based) seeks fun loving partner for romance. Interests include: exotic holidays, theatre, sailing & country walks. Photo please to Box No 4281 ✍

TREAT yourself to the best. You can't afford to compromise call E.C. on 07000 499 8833

MANAGING Director, 6ft 2in, 51, dark haired & slim, seeks his someone special. I am divorced, no children, hard working & successful. I enjoy dining out, wine, travel, weekends away and, hopefully, your company. If you are 27-43, fun to be with, interesting, attractive & sensual, I would love to hear from you. Chelsea. Photo please. Please Reply to Box No 4287 ✍

GAY men London/Home Counties seeking long term relationships - ring Significant Others - the gay intro bureau for professionals. 0171 494 0009

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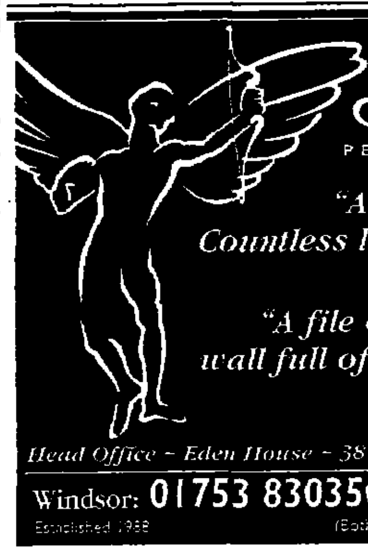

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LADIES

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GENTLEMEN

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ARE you a good looking, sophisticated, feminine lady, under 35 who desires the good things in life in a permanent relationship, then this very attractive, happy, affluent, strong minded businessman, aged 44 WLTM you for dining out, theatre & travel. Photo & tel no. appreciated London/ Home counties but willing to travel. Reply to Box No 4445 ☎ ✍

ARE you small, fit, N/S, with love of travel, outdoors, good food and music? Professional, solvent, young looking 52, 5'6", widower, Midlands based, seeks someone to share life. Lets exchange photos/details. Please reply to Box No 4365 ✍

ARE you one in a million? Tall, handsome, adventurous, 37 yrs guy wants the best relationship in the world, for ever!!! Please reply to Box No 4430 ☎ ✍

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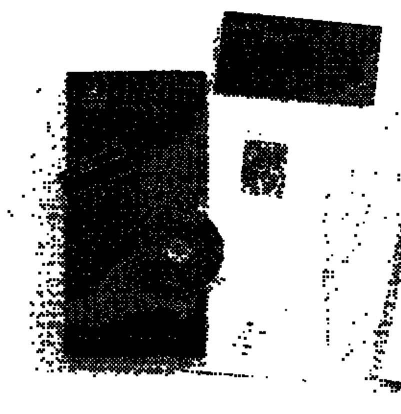

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LADIES phone now! W Midlands/ Warwickshire over 500 local genuine clients call Elite Introductions 0121 323 3314

LONELY widower, mid 70's, N/S, house/car. GSOH, solvent WLTM happy homely slimish lady to share close caring companionship. N. London based. Please Reply to Box No 4425 ☎ ✍

MAN about town, 45, attractive, cosmopolitan & sporty, looking now to find the better half in order to make a long term commitment. Enjoys travel, wining, dining, theatre & socializing. Are you attractive, thirties, good company ready to share your life, then let's go for the stars. London based. Please reply with photo to Box 4478 ☎ ✍

MAYDAY! - kind, sensitive, London based, divorced businessman early 50s, WLTM slim, attractive, n/s younger woman to share my passion for the sea as well as the good life. Weekends aboard a luxury motor yacht in the Solent. If you think you could be the the perfect companion & crew plse reply with photo to Box 4424 ☎ ✍

SATURDAY RENDEZVOUS

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I'M CHRIS

I used to work for one of the largest introduction agencies in the U.K. Our members kept asking me:
Why won't you refund our fees towards any other introduction service in Europe? The Executive Club will.
Why didn't you show me the details of members who were suitable for me before I joined, so I could see both the quantity and quality of members you actually had? The Executive Club will.
Why do you only promise to extend my membership until I have had 6 introductions even if I have only been offered one person in a whole year? If The Executive Club ever failed to offer at least 25 members in my first 4 months to choose my dates from, they would apologise and refund all my money.
Why are your contracts covered in small print? The Executive Club doesn't have any small print!
Why do you expect me to travel 100 miles to meet people when The Executive Club considers 25 miles more than enough?
I am now a Consultant to The Executive Club and I was truly amazed at the quantity and quality of their members. I can honestly say, if you are of the quality to be accepted, I believe their service to be in a league of its own and the finest available in Europe.
Signed,
Chris
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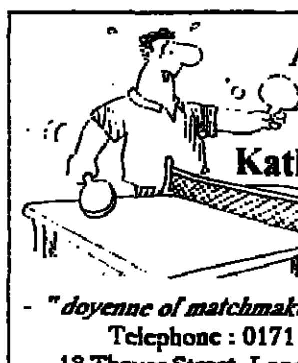

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Sun and safari with the ancient Masai

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THE TIMES travel

Moonshine and the modern Mayans

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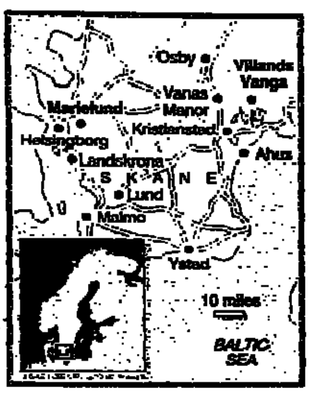
Old Mac Sven he had a farm



For the warmest welcome and the freshest air, why not take the family to a Swedish farm?

Swedish pigs don't go "oink", they say "noff noff"; and Swedish ducks go "kvak", the horses say "gneg" and the dogs do a "voof". It is important to know this if you take your children for a summer holiday on a Swedish farm, because it is not long before all that sunshine, fresh air and awesomely orderly countryside inspire a family chorus of *Old Macdonald had a Farm*. I mean, of course, Per Olsson's *bonnagard*.

The tune is the same, but who would know that the Swedish for ee-i-ee-i-o is ian-lian-lej? It required some patient instruction from Ludwig, the seven-year-old son of the farmer we stayed with near Helsingborg, before I heard my children merrily singing, "de va noff noff har, de va noff noff dar" in the back seat of our car.

Nursery rhymes are not the only thing we have in common with the Swedes. Most of us assume they live in a healthy, pine-scented paradise where everyone lies on duvets dreaming up clever-clogs furniture and designer vodkas. Listen to a Swedish farmer's wife moaning about the price of pigs over her kitchen table, though, and you wonder who switched on *The Archers*.

"We make only £4 from a pig now that Sweden has joined the EU," complained Ludwig's mum, Maria Hofvendal. We knew this was serious because 1,000 of those pigs were noff-noffing away in a nearby shed. In a sense, our holidaying here was saving their bacon, because for the past three years Maria and her husband Peter have been offering *Rum & Frukost* (bed and breakfast) on their farm to raise some extra cash. They belong to a nationwide scheme known as *Bo pa Lantgard* (Stay on a Farm), which offers accommodation on 140 farms from Malmö to the Arctic Circle.

The greatest concentration of B&F farms is in Skåne, Sweden's southernmost county. This is the country's breadbasket, a prosperous land of undulating agricultural plains, neat market towns and spotless sandy beaches. Most farms are within a three-hour drive from the ferry port of Gothenburg, and they differ considerably.

We stayed on two farms during our week's package, starting with Marielund, belonging to Maria and Peter, on Skåne's west coast. Built in 1892, this was hardly a farmhouse, more a grand manorial powerbase with a steepled clock tower and Renaissance façade that reflected the wealth Peter's forefathers enjoyed before the farm shrunk to its present 500 acres. My wife and I were billeted in a splendid octagonal bedroom with a white-tiled stove and heirloom furnishings, while the children had an adjoining en suite room equipped with a treasury of board games and toys.

Most farms in Sweden take only a few guests, and it is up to visitors how much they get involved with the daily life. Some people come every year to help with the harvest or lambing, and the visitors' book at Marielund included hearty thanks "for letting us plough your fields" from a group of New Zealanders clearly suffering from tractor withdrawal.

We were more indolent, preferring to read on the lawns, potter about the farmyard and sit on the fence while Ludwig got ticked off for using his mum's best salad bowl to catch frogs and salamanders. Our two children thought they had reached heaven, because in addition to those uneconomical pigs, Marielund had three Shetland ponies, a dozen sheep, several chickens, eight cats and a pet rabbit — and it was a big mistake to pop out to say goodnight to them all.

Swedish farmers are a perpetually busy lot, but Peter took time from nursing his pigs and sugar beet to provide free tractor rides, show us the crayfish-breeding pond that was his pride and joy, and arrange for a friend to take the children on jaunts by pony and trap through the flower-filled meadows.

There was a similar willingness to drop pitchforks and care for us on our second farm at Villands Vanga, on Skåne's east coast. Before we got in the front door, its owner, Staffan Ostlind, had us inspecting some two-day-old piglets, feeding the hens and commiserating with a lame lamb on the lawn. The farm exemplified the legendary industriousness of the Swedish homesteader. Besides 40 pigs, 25 ewes, a soppy dog and 12 acres of apple orchards, Steffan and his wife Cecilia had adopted four Brazilian children, aged 11 to 16. "And I'm looking for a job," Steffan said with all seriousness.

The Ostlinds were a principled family with 11 bicycles but no television, who sang and played guitars, wove lambs' wool, put milk on their stewed fruit and offered us dastardly Swedish tongue-twisters at breakfast. They were a mad, loving lot and our nights on their farm were like staying with friends.

We slept upstairs on a vast water bed, dined on meatballs with berry sauce and went on Famous Five-style adventures to flush deer out of orchards and penetrate the dark, troll-filled forests.

Thoughtfully, Cecilia had left in our room a bumper file of tourist information in English, which we used to make fruitful sightseeing expeditions into northeast Skåne. Wooded, hilly and patched with lakes, it has greater variety than the flatter and more developed west coast. We followed a scenic drive around Lake Ivösjön, took a picnic to the sculpture park at Wanas Manor, mucked about on the sandy beaches near Åhus, and went mad with a credit card in a branch of Hennes in Kristianstad.

The real treat for the children was in Osby, which we discovered was the home of those sensible wooden toymakers Brio. I had always assumed the company's name was a reference to Italian vivacity, but it stands for the Brothers Ivarsson of Osby.

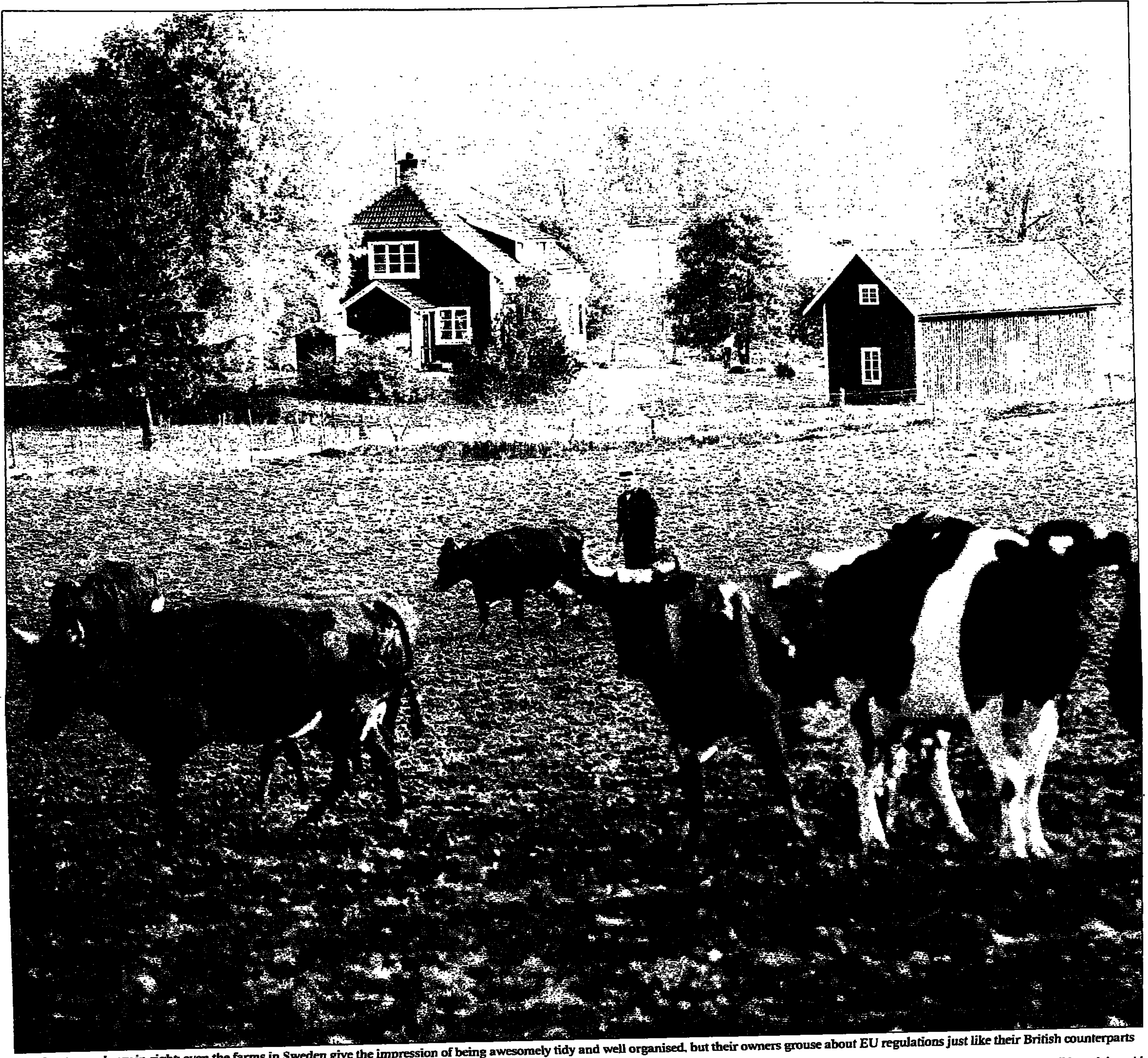
Famous for their train sets, those good bricks at Brio have converted some railway carriages into a brightly coloured, hands-on toy museum, where children sit for hours happily hammering square pegs into round holes. Typically, my urban brats shunned educational carpentry in favour of the museum's vast collection of Barbie dolls, which sparkles and shimmies its way from the dainty air stewardesses of the 1960s to today's busty beach warriors. Here was Suburban Shopper and Friday Nite Date, Career Girl and Knit Hit, all perfectly turned out with their ever-shine smiles.

You would not get Barbie down on a mucky old Swedish farm ponging of pigs — and that was precisely why we liked being there.

NIGEL TISDALL

● *The author was a guest of Scandinavian Seaways.*

VISUM



And not a mad cow in sight: even the farms in Sweden give the impression of being awesomely tidy and well organised, but their owners grouse about EU regulations just like their British counterparts

NIGEL TISDALL

Nigel Tisdall's children with pony and trap at Marielund

FACT FILE

■ Scandinavian Seaways (0990 333 111) offers farmhouse holidays to Skåne using its ferry routes from Harwich and Newcastle to Gothenburg.

■ A week's package in mid-season (until July 13, and August 20 to September 30) costs £293 for an adult and £137.50 for a child aged four-15. This makes the price for a family of two adults and two children £861. Summer peak prices are £337 and £156.50 child (£987 for a family of four). Prices include five nights B&B on a farm and return overnight crossings with car and cabin. Dinner costs about £5 for adult, £3 for a child, and is paid direct to the farmer.

■ A free brochure listing all the farms in the Bo pa Lantgard scheme is available from the Swedish Travel and Tourism Council (0171-724 5872), which can also supply information on visiting the country.

■ Reading: the Travel Bookshop (0171-229 5260) recommends: *Merab's Beauty*, by Torgny Lindgren (Harvill, £5.95). *A Short Residence in Sweden*, by Mary Wollstonecraft (Penguin, £5.99). *Blue Guide Sweden*, by Mary Alderton (A&C Black, £12.99).

JILL CRAWSHAW'S SWEDISH TRAVEL TIPS

■ STOCKHOLM, European Culture Capital for 1999, is one of Europe's most attractive summer capitals built on a series of islands linked by some 50 bridges. The inhabitants boast of canoeing or sailing to work. There are open air chess games, jazz and classical concerts in the city parks and 26,000 islets. Two nights B&B with flights costs from £340 (extra nights £45) from Sovereign Scanscape (0181-880 8101).

■ IF YOU want to visit the folk province of Dalarna, where Carl Larsson, Sweden's most famous painter, created Swedish style, Crystal Holidays (0181-399 5144) is offering a new programme to Lake Siljan. A week's half board costs £569 which includes flights and bicycle hire.

■ THE SWEDISH law of "Allemansratten" is the Right of Public Access whereby locals and visitors alike can walk, cycle, ride, pitch tents on anyone's land, moor a boat, pick wild fruit or mushrooms except in a nature reserve, provided there's no damage to wildlife or crops. Details from Swedish Travel & Tourism Council (0171-724 5868).

■ OLD STEAM ships renovated to modern standards ply the 19th-century Gota Canal which links Lakes Vanern and Vattern, completing the system of waterways crossing Sweden from the North Sea to the Baltic, and from Gothenburg to Stockholm.

Scandinavian Travel Service (0171-559 6060) has a week's holiday with two nights in Stockholm, one night in Gothenburg and a four-day full-board cruise through the canal stopping at old castles, churches and villages en route. Prices start from £989 with return flights from London.

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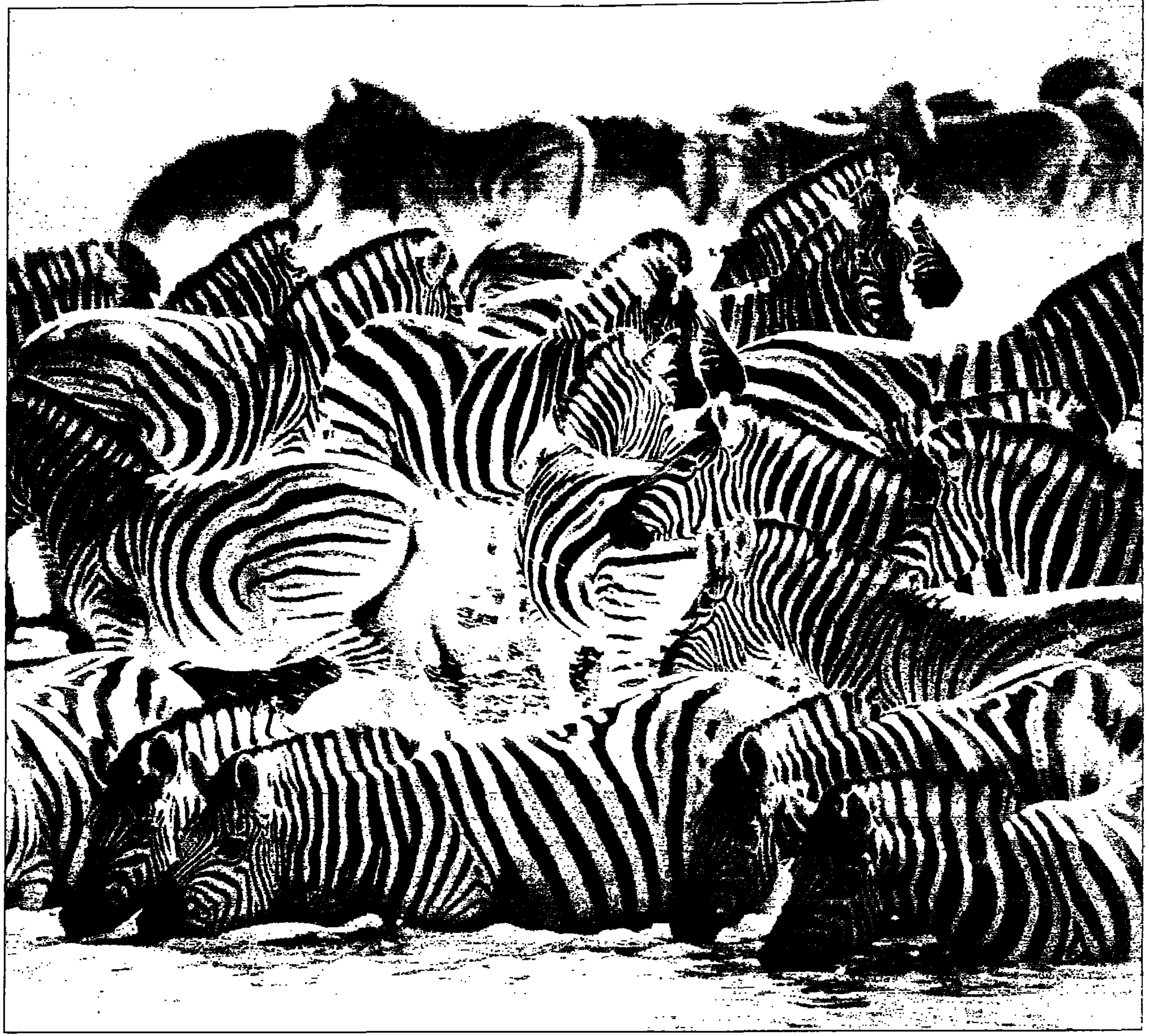
Kenya: From the beachside comforts of Mombasa to the national reserves …

TONY STONE



At the Tsavo National Park, the zebra came in families to the waterhole, their black and white stripes making dazzling, eye-catching patterns as they jostled at the water's edge

Noah would like this

It was as if Noah had just emptied his ark after the flood. James, our naturalist and driver, had stopped on a slope above a waterhole in Kenya's Tsavo National Park. My husband and I and our sons, aged eight and six, got out, established our positions, adjusted our binoculars and waited.

A small flock of white pelicans with big yellow beaks arrived first. Many more followed, flying in formation against the ripening sunset. A hippopotamus came up for air to inspect them and a solitary stork watched, stony still, from the bank.

Then zebras came in families to stroll beside the water, their sharp stripes making surprisingly effective camouflage. Waterbuck arrived to sip among the Egyptian geese. A group of water buffalo kept themselves to themselves.

Further off, a herd of impala moved into view, but kept their nervous distance. Then, slowly and majestically, the elephants began to arrive, in extended families with the young suckling their mothers, and in great lines striding like soldiers across the scrub.

Elephants of all sizes arrived, family after family wading into the water to cool off. All was idyllic when, suddenly, two great tuskers broke into a fight. Locking tusks and crashing heads, they became a confusion of legs, flapping ears, terrific noise and clouds of red dust.

It was a spectacular introduction to the wildlife of Kenya, its apparent calm and its raw energy.

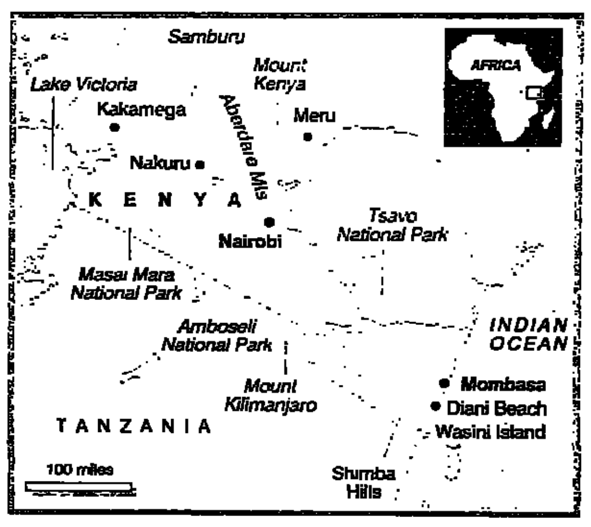
Over the next two days we moved through a gazetteer of animals and birds. We watched a lioness training her cubs, leopards unsuccessfully stalking some zebra, ridiculously ungainly ostriches prancing through their mating dances, hideous warthogs scuttling along with tails up like periscopes, mongooses feasting at a giant termite nest. We had the safari van to ourselves and only saw other people at a distance.

Morning and evening we explored the park from our base, Satao Camp. Trevor Jennings runs it, a third generation Kenyan whose aim is to recreate the *ad hoc* camps his family made here when he was a child. Then, the park boasted 50,000 elephant and 6,000 rhino instead of today's respective figures of only 9,000 and 80.

Satao Camp has a few modern luxuries, but not too many. The large tents have adjoining wooden bathrooms, where a leather sack suspended from the ceiling provides hot showers to wash off the Tsavo dust.

At night, we could sit outside sipping our South African wine and watching the wildlife 100 yards away knowing that askaris (night watchmen) were on the alert.

One night, to our sons' delight, they had to fire their guns to scare off a lioness coming in search of her two curious cubs who had been attracted by the camp lights.



TSAVO AND MOMBASA FACT FILE

- **Tropical Places (01342 825123) offers two-week packages at the Indian Ocean Beach Club, including flights from Gatwick direct to Mombasa, transfers, breakfast and dinner, from £769 per adult, £349 child up to 12 sharing room, until June 15.**
- **A three-day, two-night safari at Satao camp, booked through Tropical Places, costs £210. An excursion to Shimba Hills, costs £80, including accommodation, dinner and a game drive.**
- **Excursions from Indian Ocean Beach Club, including Wasini island, can be booked locally.**
- **Reading: *Beauty of the Kenya Coast*, by Mohamed Amin and Duncan Willetts (Westland Sundries, £7.95); *Adventure in Mombasa*, by Juma Bustani (Heineman, £3.75).**

Satao was our extravagant three-day jaunt during a fortnight of cosseted sumptuousness beside the Indian Ocean. We had flown from Gatwick into tropical Mombasa.

Driving from Moi Airport past coconut palms and trees glowing with large yellow and orange flowers, we glimpsed the city and its hotchpotch life: a tailor working at a treadle sewing machine, cows wandering the streets, English road signs, an Indian-run bookstore, an advertisement for "slapping good shoes", a bright yellow temple, a green mosque, a noisy Hard Rock Café and a kanga-wrapped woman carrying a laden basket on her head.

The cashew nut dispensary and the basket shop were tempting, as were the piles of mangoes and papayas, but we pressed on. Across the ferry crowded with lace-capped Muslims on their way to work, the road south took us to Diani Beach and the Indian Ocean Beach Club.

This oasis of elegance was designed by Nairobi architects and immaculately managed by (the mainly British) Block hotels. Two-storey cottages in thatched Swahili or whitewashed coastal Islamic styles are scattered through acres of lush garden, punctuated by mature baobab trees and cascades of bougainvillea.

Our first-floor rooms had big balconies, planters' chairs and four-poster beds draped with mosquito nets. From here, we would spot dhows and ships plying the Indian Ocean, which glistened in the fresh post-monsoon sunshine. The occasional tail-end monsoon shower not only refreshed the air but kept the temperatures comfortable. Later in the year, apparently, solid blue skies would bring blistering heat and a dust-filled wind.

Life was an indulgent amble through each lazy day. While we did nothing much, our two sons burnt up energy in the pool, at sessions of beach volleyball and at the impressive evening entertainment.

On the beach we collected shells, swam in warm lagoons, jumped surf waves (leaving others to tackle the strong undertow current), built complex sandcastles and borrowed a hotel pedalo to go out to the reef to peer at Kenya's rich underwater life.

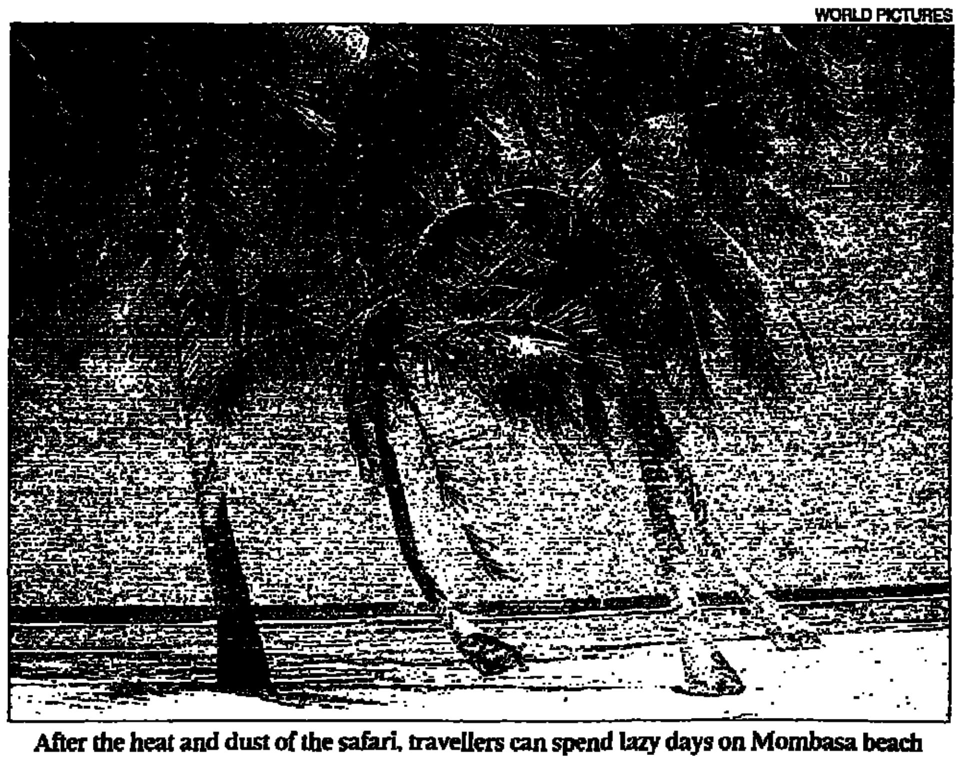
Our sunset walks to spot grey herons, egrets and monkeys at the river estuary became a daily ritual. Contrary to dire warnings in Britain, we did not tear our feet on the coral-ridden sands. Neither did we get sunstroke: the July sunshine was not powerful enough. Aggressive hawkers certainly existed down the beach in front of other hotels, but our small bunch were harmless. When young Oliver asked one if he was a pirate, he replied he was a "beach businessman" and they became firm friends. However, newspaper stories of regular shootings and knifings in Mombasa deterred us from making bus trips to the city.

One day, we went inland to overnight at Shimba Hills Lodge, a huge treehouse in the forest. Another, we travelled south through a rural landscape of paddy fields and cashew nut trees, blossoming flame trees and roadside mosques and cafés. We lunched on Wasini Island, gorging ourselves on giant crabs, and then spent tiny sums on finely carved wooden spoons, baskets and vibrantly coloured kangas.

Perhaps we chose our hotel and our safari well; both were ideal for a family holiday, even if we barely touched the raw energy of the country. When I asked Renata, our agent, about other hotels south of Mombasa she replied: "You don't even have to peek. There's no competition."

LOUISE NICHOLSON

WORLD PICTURES



After the heat and dust of the safari, travellers can spend lazy days on Mombasa beach

TRAVEL TIPS

- AFRICA Exclusive (01604 28979) has tailor-made three and five-day safaris, accompanied by local Masai, following the Ngare Ndare river near Samburu, *Jill Crawshaw writes.* It also offers a variety of horseback safaris from five to 13 days. Any of these trips can be combined with a stay in a small beach house at Diani Beach, from which you can make private tented safaris. Prices are from £2,000 for two-weeks.
- ABERCROMBIE & Kent (0171-730 9600) has week-long "Wings over Kenya" safaris using light aircraft to link some of the country's most secluded game parks. The full-board holiday costs from £1,480-£2,460 including fares from the UK.
- WORLDWIDE Journeys and Expeditions (0171-381 8638) has a "Roof of Africa" adventure which takes in two of Africa's highest mountains, Kilimanjaro and Mount Kenya, camping en route. The trails used are walks, not climbs, and need fitness rather than mountaineering skills. An 18-day holiday starts at £1,995, an 11-day Kilimanjaro-only climb from £1,565, both including flights.
- THE range of safari options from Kuoni (01306 743000) by minibus or four-wheel drive land-cruisers include a leopard safari, cheetah safari and a "Dick Hedges Camping Safari". A seven-night "Out of Africa" safari, visiting Olkurruk where the Karen Blixen story was filmed, costs from £798-£1,157 per week including flights.

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. . . where if you run into any buffalo, find a tree to climb fast, so that you live to see the white rhinos

Take a walk on the wild side

By the 1980s, safari-goers were scoffing at Kenya. Africa's original wildlife mecca had become a parody of its former, frontier self: minibuses crowding in unseemly scrums around sightings of Africa's "Big Five" — and little else — before decanting their passengers at 300-bed lodges. Africa Kenya-style was about overcrowded parks and reserves, and accommodation with all the atmosphere of airport hotels.

Even today, just seven of the country's 59 parks account for 98 per cent of her tourists. Recently, however, a new dawn for tourism seems finally to be breaking over Africa's most scenically varied country. Kenya's extraordinary array of habitats includes the Aberdare mountains, the savannah grasslands of the Masai Mara, wetland areas such as Nakuru, classic woodlands and plains areas like Samburu and Meru, tropical rainforest at Kakamega, as well as deserts and marine reserves.

Accommodation options are increasingly popular. Remote, small-scale tented camps hark back to the bush safari experiences of an earlier age. Cattle ranches, once home to pioneer settlers, are taking in guests, particularly on the Laikipia plateau. The Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), which spent much of the 1980s tackling poachers, is now working imaginatively with local communities to establish tourism concerns on tribal lands.

David Western, director of the KWS, said: "Some 75 per cent of Kenya's wildlife live outside the parks. Creating parks beyond parks provides the people with an income alternative to cattle or arable farming, which only intensify pressure on habitat and water supply."

KWS warden Danny Woodley flew me from Nairobi south to Amboseli National Park, where the water run-off from Mount Kilimanjaro straddling the Tanzanian border provides a swamp area that attracts spectacular wildlife, not least the park's famed elephants. Mr Woodkey said: "In the 1980s the Masai were threatening to kill the park's last remaining rhinos if their land rights were not recognised. Now, they are being encouraged to establish their own tourism concerns beyond the park boundaries."

At Amboseli's award-winning Tortilis Camp, built on leased Masai land by safari operator Cheli & Peacock's Stefano Cheli, the staff and almost all local people are encouraged to appreciate their own stake in the camp's success. Thirty guests are housed in permanent tents that tumble down an attractive hillside, with uninterrupted views beyond the acacia trees of the Kilimanjaro snowcap.

In the Masai Mara wildebeest, one of Africa's greatest wildlife attractions, were gathering in huge numbers for the annual migration. The C&P camp had been pitched among untouched bush on tribal lands beyond the reserve boundaries. Here, park laws forbidding bush walking, night game drives and even game viewing from the roof of the vehicles did not apply. Distant Masai tribesmen, banned from grazing their cattle within the parks, often appeared on our game drives, their traditional red tartan wraps giving them spectacular prominence on landscapes in which all other life forms had evolved to merge. Their presence contributed to a truer African picture. These people have been part of the savannah scene for hundreds of years. Their traditional burning of the long grass is actually considered to attract game.

We ate under the stars while animal eyes danced beyond the campfire. Our tents were furnished with cast-iron beds, the freshest starched sheets and hurricane lamps. Masai tribesmen, armed with spears, stood guard over the camp by night while leopards uttered their strange sawing calls. One afternoon after tea — a colonial habit that is scrupulously observed on safari — the tribesmen led us through the bush to their nearby manyatta (village), mud huts corralled by a thorn fence.

Through an interpreter, the village elder explained that the income safari operators pay the community to camp on their land was encouraging them to look after the wildlife — their new meal ticket. "Once, it was a sign of bravery to kill lions. Now, it is stupidity," he explained. David Western calls this process "winning back space" for the wildlife. "We want the local people to regard the wildlife on their land as an asset, not as a liability," he said. It proved a heartening visit.

Just what was at stake was all too apparent from the air as Cheli flew me north from the Masai Mara where savannah abruptly gave way to wheat fields. "If we don't make tourism pay, the Masai are sure to lease their land for wheat production," he explained. "The wildlife will be driven out."

At Borana ranch, which turned to tourism three years ago, beautiful thatch and stone cottages clinging to an escarpment accommodate 16 guests in undisguised luxury. I joined a Samburu guide called Josphat for a dawn walk. Josphat wore full tribal uniform and carried a radio for protection. When I asked him what we should do in case we ran into buffalo, he suggested that I should "find a tree which is climbable and, I would say, quickly". Unnerving stuff for somebody weaned on advice about keeping the car windows wound up at Longleat.

Josphat pointed out greater kudu, waterbuck, elephant and buffalo at a safe distance. He showed me where squares of bark had been cut from the acacia trees to make a reputedly effective laxative, like pills popped from a natural packaging. Once, I might have thought laxatives were the last thing anybody could need in such surroundings. Now, however, I was enjoying myself. Call it bush communion or a closer encounter with Africa. Kenyan tourism is reinventing itself with no little effort and imagination, and finally delivering on its enormous potential.

JEREMY SEAL

● *The author was a guest of Cheli & Peacock Safaris and Worldwide Journeys & Expeditions.*

FACT FILE

- **Worldwide Journeys & Expeditions (0171-381 8638) offers a *two-week all-inclusive* package for £2,595.**
- **Cheli & Peacock Safaris (00 254 154 22551) is a Nairobi-based *ground handler* specialising in tented camp and small lodge safaris. Full-board per person is £195 per night at Borana.**
- **Yellow fever, cholera and typhoid inoculations are recommended, as are anti-malaria pills.**
- **Visitors are advised to take travellers cheques in US dollars.**
- **Kenya Tourist Office (0171-355 3144).**
- **Reading: *The Tree Where Man was Born*, by Peter Mathiessen (Harvill, £8.99). *Rough Guide to Kenya*, by Richard Trillo (£11.99). *Out of Africa*, by Karen Blixen (Penguin, £6.99).**

MICHAEL BUSSELL

The Masai, in their distinctive dress, have been a feature of the savannah landscape in Kenya for hundreds of years

The haven where rhino can roam in peace

Munghai, our driver, was never wrong. Not once did he misidentify a bird out of a possible 800 species. In terms of numbers the rainforest may have avian superiority, but East Africa's ornithology is more accessible and conspicuous. It is a wonder of the world.

He would stop the 4x4 safari car and hand us the book so we could see for ourselves his infallible selection from page after page of sunbirds, weavers, bustards, longclaws and babblers. Then he would reverently repeat the name, as if savouring a linguistic delicacy: "Rufous-naped lark. Emerald-spotted wood dove."

No nuance of colour or feather escaped him. "No, not the fiscal shrike," he politely corrected us. "The taita fiscal." So when he pronounced on the grey bulk slumped under an acacia half a mile away on the horizon — to our untutored eyes no more than a boulder — he was presenting not a hunch but a triumphant certainty: Lewa Downs's greatest prize.

Munghai started the engine and we set off uphill, pitching and jolting at less than walking pace on a track scoured to the rock by the rain, diverting around a roadblock of branches recently amputated by elephants. Then we reached the place.

Before us was the tragic, prehistoric sensation of Africa. Not one, but five drowsy white rhinos, squeezed into every spare square inch of shade, as if the sun was their only problem. To the poacher, their horns represent the most valuable animal product on earth. About £200,000 worth lay cushioned on the red earth.

If the white rhino is almost suicidally submissive, the black is three tonnes of blundering edginess, an indiscriminate menace to friend and poacher alike. Next morning we watched in awestruck silence from about 200 yards as one strained beyond its fog of short-sightedness to pick up the rumour of intrusion from our direction. Only the previous week a black rhino had dispatched a squad of visiting British soldiers into the safety of a tree, then chased their camels for two miles.

While elsewhere on the continent the last few hundred rhinos blunder myopically towards extinction, on this private conservancy they are Fort Knox-secure inside a 70-mile long, solar-powered electric fence, patrolled by more than 100 armed guards, proud men from the local tribes in green uniform.

If the guards were stood down and the fence deactivated, the rhinos would be dead within days. Conservation at Lewa Downs is not for the faint-hearted.

Fifteen miles north of the Equator, 5,500ft up on the northern foothills of snow-capped Mount Kenya, Lewa Downs is 55,000 acres of majestic African views scattered with acacias and rugged prominences, riddled steep valleys, swamps and rivers.

This land was first farmed in the 1920s by the Craig family, who even then had a conservationist vision. The second-generation Craigs initiated the switch from cattle to wildlife, which was allowed to find its way back into their benign estate.

STILL PICTURES

White rhino drink from a pond, ever watchful for poachers

The third generation of Craigs, William and Emma, working with a trust which administers Lewa as a nature conservancy, is completing the transition to a final balance of 85 per cent game to 15 per cent cattle. During our visit, black and white rhino numbers were equal after some recent births, 44 in total.

Lewa's other specialities are some of Africa's biggest herds of reticulated giraffe and Grevy's zebra. It recently reintroduced the rare sitatunga. Otherwise it admits anything that wants to enter through a 30-yard gap in the fence. Animals are free to leave (Lewa is not a zoo) — all except the rhino which, with its short legs, cannot step over a low wall in the fence gap.

Lewa is persuasive proof of the new and optimistic proposition in Africa that wildlife is worth more alive than dead, and that an entire local economy can be sustained by eco-tourism. Several hundred local people now work there.

The Craigs treat the safari experience as if it were a limited edition. In many of the East African national parks congestion is becoming a serious problem. Visitors may have to join a scrum of as many as 30 vehicles to view a pride of lions. Here only 60 tourists are admitted at any one time, accommodated thinly around the conservancy.

No amount of familiarisation by the BBC's wildlife output could prepare us for the elemental thrill of our first game drive. Here was nature in primeval abundance, spaced out as if by some invisible demarcation.

To adult eyes that had previously seen just one eagle, briefly, distantly, over western Scotland, here was a double-layer chocolate box of them, with the bateleur — broad white breast — demanding to be picked first. We had never seen a goshawk. Lewa has four species. Our first was a passage of epic poetry on wings, the pale-chanting goshawk.

A single tree illustrated the fabulous carrying capacity of the African eco-system. In one small acacia the only two perching places were taken by the assassin and the harlequin. The continent's smallest bird of prey, the pygmy falcon, sat alongside the scarlet-breasted roller, sumptuously quartered in red and green and blue and lilac.

Lewa has the complete feline complement, including nomadic lions, deep in the ample cover and rarely seen. In the end we saw but a solitary cat, but it was worth a dozen encounters with a comatose pride out on the hot plains, corralled by tourist vehicles.

The brief, copper dusk had plummeted into deep night in minutes. Munghai, one hand on the wheel, a flashlight in the other, was sweeping the river edge. Animals twinkled back ocular acknowledgement. Red/brown meant bush baby; blue/green was water buck. But Munghai had a hunch. He stopped, reversed and teased the undergrowth. With his flashlight he conjured a mottled form out of the black. Briefly, he exposed a solitary hunter, pure blue for . . . leopard.

We sampled two forms of accommodation at Lewa. The tented camp, encapsulating the practised comforts familiar to two centuries of British officers under canvas, was in effect a five-star hotel trundled round the game reserves on the back of a truck, with an attendant per tent — two when it came to filling up the gravity shower with water heated on a wood fire.

We also stayed in one of the six stone cottages in the gardens of the Craigs' home. The days were a succession of colonial indulgences. They began with a pre-dawn flask of tea on our verandah and ended, after an excellent meal from Michael, the visiting Irish chef hired from a London restaurant to refresh the catering, with drinks on the Craigs' balcony, where we would listen for the roar of lions in the valley below.

One morning Mr Craig was our pilot in his restored biplane on a circuit of the estate, as the sun rose over Mount Kenya. The next he was our host for a breakfast on the plains under an acacia, after a horse ride among the giraffe.

For one memorable afternoon walk we were led out by a immaculate young Masai, hair plaited, dressed in a shift of startling scarlet and carrying a spear. Not some tourist gimmick, but a trainee guide on work experience.

Lewa wants to replicate its model of eco-tourism in the Masai's own reserves nearby. If the tribes can make an income from the wildlife around them, they, better than anyone, will be able to conserve it. There is hope for Africa's wildlife.

GARETH HUW DAVIES

● *The author was a guest of Abercrombie & Kent.*

LEWA DOWNS FACT FILE

- Abercrombie & Kent (0171-559 8666) has seven-night safari itineraries from £1,565 per person, based on four travelling together, including flights and private camping.
- *British Airways (0345 222111)* has a daily overnight flight from Gatwick to Nairobi, with 21-day advance fares from £513.
- *For trips to the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy*, contact the Nairobi office on 00 254 2 48314, fax: 00 254 2 447310. For trips to the Lerai *tented camp*, book through East African Ornithological Safaris on 00 254 2 331191, fax: 00 254 2 330698.
- *Reading: Birds of East Africa*, by J.G. Williams and N. Arlott (Collins, £16.99). *East Africa Handbook*, by Michael Hodd (Footprint, £14.99). *Wild Flowers of East Africa*, by Michael Blundell (Collins, £14.99).

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The Americas: Graceland prepares for the 20th anniversary of Elvis's death; the Mexicans drink to their saints

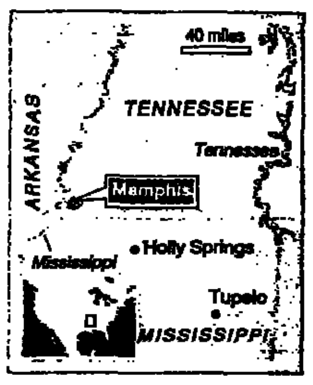
The king is dead, long live the king

It will be proof of Elvis Presley's enduring appeal. An expected 50,000 fans, including 1,200 from Britain, will gather outside Graceland, his home in Memphis, at dusk on Friday, August 15 to mark the 20th anniversary of his death.

A section of Elvis Presley Boulevard will be closed to traffic as the gates open. Fans will walk up the drive, each carrying a lighted candle. They will file past his grave and walk back down. The vigil will continue until dawn. Judging by past performances, many will be in tears.

This tribute to the king of rock'n'roll has grown into a string of commemorative events that will be bigger than ever this year. The week opens with a banquet for leaders of 370 Elvis fan clubs around the world and ends with a concert that will see him reunited in performance, thanks to video technology, with his backup singers and musicians. Seminars on the Elvis cult and its semi-religious overtones will be held by academics who, fending off criticism, insist that his significance is worthy of serious study.

Death Week gets booked up early but walking in the footsteps of Elvis is now a year-round tourist attraction. The Elvis trail begins 90 miles south of Memphis in Tupelo, Mississippi, at the two-room shack where he was born into poverty and lived until he was 13. It was built by his father, uncle and grandfather, all farm workers, and had no electricity or plumbing. The home is open to the public, along with a small museum and memorial chapel.



Next stop on the trail is Holly Springs, halfway between Tupelo and Memphis, to visit Paul MacLeod, the world's biggest Elvis fan, and his son, Elvis Aaron Presley MacLeod. Both look and dress like Elvis. Their lives are devoted to compiling Elvis memorabilia. Their home, Graceland Too, is a sagging mini-clone of the original and a unique Elvis shrine.

Then there are the funky clubs along Beale Street in Memphis where the teenage Elvis, a truck driver by day, soaked up the blues by night. Well worth visiting is Sun Studios where he cut his first records and where the owner, Sam Phillips, realised he had found a white boy who could sing black rhythm and blues.

An airbrushed Elvis is presented at Graceland, now owned by his daughter, Lisa Marie. There is no talk here of the eating binges that helped to kill him at 42, nor any mention of Ginger Alden, his 21-year-old fiancée who found his bloated body slumped in the lavatory. Only the briefest reference is made to his dependence on drugs and none to the shambles his life became.

Rather, he is portrayed as a family man who could hardly wait to get home from work. Yes, there was the time he shot out the screen of a television set, one of 14 in the house, but, hey, what's a little high-spirited target practice for the king?

Graceland runs second only to the White House as the best-known home in America. Some 750,000 make the pilgrimage annually. It is prudent to go as early as 8am in summer, before the humidity kicks in. The Southern mansion, with its imposing columns and portico, is surprisingly small inside. Beyond the front door lies a time warp of decor, furnishings and kitsch, unchanged since the Sixties and Seventies.

PICTORIAL

Elvis Presley at Graceland in the mid-Sixties, before the pressure of fame turned his life into a shambles of eating binges and drug dependency

There is also a big disappointment. The tour does not go upstairs. Visitors are barred from Elvis's bedroom and the bathroom where he died, "out of respect" says the management. A curtain is drawn at the top of the stairs, a touch of hokum that artfully reinforces the whispered myth: "*He's still up there.*"

The tour is presented on audio cassettes with recollections from Priscilla Presley, who remained close to Elvis after their divorce. As visitors gaze at the music room with its baby grand, Priscilla says: "When Elvis was down or had the urge to sing he would go to this room and start playing the piano. We spent hours jamming and laughing here."

The dining-room table is set for six. Elvis sat where he could keep an eye on the television set. Dinner would be late, around 9.30pm, with Southern dishes such as pork chops, black-eyed peas and collard greens. They would dress for dinner, Priscilla in a gown with sequins, Elvis in three-piece suit with brocade waistcoat. She explains: "Elvis loved to dress up to show how far he had come."

Priscilla makes light of his dietary compulsions. One time it was meatloaf every night for six months until she pleaded for something different.

The TV room has three sets built into one wall so that Elvis could watch all the networks at the same time. The felt of the pool table is still ripped where one of the buddies tried a trick shot — high jinks frozen in time.

In half an hour of impulse buying, Elvis furnished his den in execrable taste. The heavy chairs and coffee table are grotesquely carved with an African motif of snarling animals. Behind the mansion, the tour winds through Elvis's trophy room with all his gold and platinum records, plus the spangled jump-suits and bejewelled belts he wore for his final concerts. In the Meditation Garden, visitors fall silent beside the flat bronze grave markers for Elvis, his parents and his grandmother, Minnie Mae Presley. Fans send flowers every day, fresh, silk and plastic.

Across the street are Elvis's flamboyant cars, his customised four-engine jet with its blue suede bed, two diners, the Rockabilly Bar and five gift shops with a surfeit of Elvis T-shirts, key rings, coffee mugs and other trinkets. Unlike Sid Shaw, the former London barrow boy who won his High Court trademark battle against Elvis Presley Enterprises Inc., Graceland does not sell "*Are You Lonesome Tonight?*" knickers.

IAN BRODIE

MEMPHIS FACT FILE

- Delta Airlines (0800 414767) flies from Gatwick to Memphis via Atlanta or Cincinatti for £554 return (including tax) between June 15 and September 30 with 21-day advance booking.
- KLM (0990 750900) has daily flights to Memphis via Amsterdam for £554 return during the summer.
- A Graceland brochure and general Memphis information can be obtained from the Memphis and Tennessee office in the UK (01462 440787).
- The Visitors Information Centre, 340 Beale St, Memphis, TN 38103, USA. Ask for the list of places of interest in Elvis's life. A map and audio tape, *Walking in the Footsteps of Elvis*, $23 (£14), can be ordered by credit card by telephone from Elvis International on 001 818 991 3892, or fax 001 818 991 3894.
- Graceland tour (001 901 332 3322) is $18.50 (£11) for adults, $11 (£6.50) for children aged 7-12. Open 9am-6pm summer, 9am-5pm winter, closed Tuesdays Nov-Feb. The hotel next door to Graceland is Wilson World (001 901 332 1000) at $60 (£35) a night, double occupancy.
- The Wilson World is sold out during the anniversary celebrations. However, Unique Tours (0800 962830) has packages for mid-August. Two nights cost from $109 (£65) per person, based on double occupancy, to include a Graceland tour, riverboat cruise and one other option — including Sun Studios.
- Beale St clubs all have food and live music. The best is B.B. King's Blues Club. New on the scene from June is Elvis Presley's Memphis club-restaurant with seating for 300. Sun Studios, 706 Union St, Memphis, is open 10am-6pm.
- Elvis Presley birthplace, museum and chapel in Tupelo, Mississippi, 90 miles southeast of Memphis, well signposted off Interstate Highway 78. Open 9am-5pm. Graceland Too (001 601 252 7954), home of Paul MacLeod in Holly Springs, Mississippi. Always open. Call ahead for directions: admission $5 (£3).
- Reading: *Last train to Memphis: The rise of Elvis Presley*, by Peter Guralnick (Abacus, £9.99). *Elvis Aaron Presley — revelations from the Memphis Mob*, by Alanna Nash (HarperCollins, £5.99).

Moonshine with the Mayans in Mexico

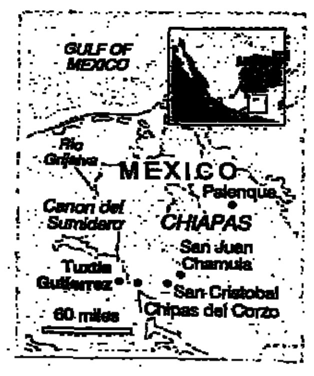
In the past two years, the Mexican province of Chiapas has been riven by conflict. But now hostilities seem to be over and this beautiful, lushly forested region is welcoming tourists again.

The provincial capital, Tuxtla Gutierrez, is a large, unlovely town in the humid lowlands of northern Chiapas and has the only airport for miles around. Head straight out of the place and take to the hills — and San Cristobal — perhaps stopping to visit the spectacular Canon del Sumidero, en route.

This magnificent, kilometre-deep canyon conveys the Rio Grijalva on its way to the Pacific, and is so big it has its own microclimate. Boats for viewing Sumidero's mists and heat-hazes can be hired at the pier in Chiapas del Corzo. The trip is certainly worth the £3-£4. Vultures wheel against a cloudless blue sky, herons nest in crags halfway up the unclimbable walls. Crocodiles are rumoured to lurk beneath the waters.

A day spent in the canyon means a late afternoon journey into the remote, mysterious uplands of central Chiapas. It is a beautiful trip. Suddenly the foothills rear out of the arid Mexican plain, higher and higher into the verdant forests.

Our bus (the best and cheapest way of getting round Mexico) was one of those where the driver is a Zen Master of Taking Corners Too Fast: but the scenery was too distracting for nerves.



MEXICO FACT FILE

- Trips Worldwide (0117-987 2626) has Continental Airlines (0800 776 4640) flights to Mexico City from £460. A two-week itinerary similar to that of the author starts at £1,750, with flights and accommodation.
- Health: recommended injections are typhoid, cholera and hepatitis A. Malaria tablets are also recommended.
- Reading: *The Ancient Kingdoms of Mexico*, by Nigel Davies (Penguin, £7.99). *Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas and Yucatan*, by John L. Stephens (Dover, two volumes, £8.95 & £9.95). *Mexico Handbook* (Moon, £14.95).

At San Cristobal, a colonial hilltown ringed by noble mountainscapes, you can see eagles from the town square. The lack of tourists is agreeable and the by-product cheapness means that you can get a good hotel room for £5, a beer for 30p, and a huge meal for £2.50 — tacos, beans and enchiladas.

Alcohol also plays a part in local life — in particular, the Mayan moonshine known as *posh*. This is a vicious spirit distilled during religious festivals by the Mayan Indians. At San Juan Chamula, on the feast of their patron saint, the "church" full of worshippers in sheepskins wafts incense over waxwork saints.

Outside the church the noise of the fireworks and skirl of the accordion music became deafening. Eventually, we found a quieter spot — a clearing surrounded by mud huts. In one of the huts we discovered we could buy a bottle of *posh*.

Carefully, the bar owner poured the clear liquor out of a petrol can and sold the bottle to us for just 10p, a price which should have acted as a warning. But we guzzled it all the same and after an hour were singing a selection of songs from *Oliver!* Two hours later we blacked out.

For a glimpse of the Mayan empire in its antique splendour you have to take a bus out of San Cristobal, through the mountains, past the great Lacandon rainforest, down to the lost city of Palenque.

Palenque means palisade in Spanish but this place is more than a defensive fortification. It is a 1,000-year-old complex of grey stone castles and temples dedicated to Chac, the man-eating rain god.

If you are lucky you might catch a glimpse of the quetzal bird, whose exquisite turquoise feathers were once dispatched by the Conquistador Hernan Cortés, as an example of the New World's beauty, to a delighted King of Spain. I know how he felt.

SEAN THOMAS

● *The author was a guest of Trips Worldwide and Continental Airlines.*

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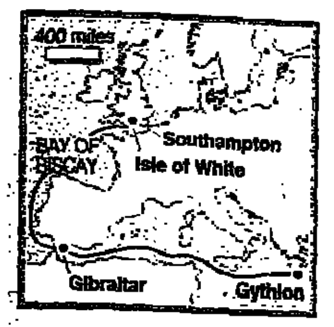
هكذا من الأصل

Cruising: sailing on the *Oriana* with energetic octogenarians and enough food to sink a battleship

Life on the ocean rave



It struck me, as I strolled the sunny promenade deck of the *Oriana* taking the Mediterranean air, with the tawny haze of north Africa on the starboard beam, that in the days I had been aboard I had not sighted a single pair of jeans.

Daytime fashion aboard was decidedly Middle England — casual but smart. It was all of a piece with the distinctive and comfortable ambience of the ship, with the polished wood and brasswork, with service that was attentive and dignified without being pressing.

The strong sense of Britain afloat was underlined by the voices. In the bars and on the decks, in the three swimming pools and five jacuzzis, I heard the cadences of Plymouth, Bristol, Birmingham, Cardiff, Belfast, Leeds, Edinburgh, London and Liverpool.

Ninety-five per cent of the 1,700 passengers ordered morning tea (on P&O's American ships the same percentage order coffee) and most kicked off the day with the full English breakfast — complete, of course, with sausages and mushrooms. Muesli was well down in the popularity stakes. A chap at my table said stoutly: "My test of a good breakfast is how the porridge is cooked and I have to say," — as he spooned another mouthful — "it's pretty good." On the matter of food, Captain Colin Campbell said emphatically: "On this ship, dinner counts." It seemed that breakfast, lunch and afternoon tea counted, too, but there was no doubt that the five-course dinner was the pinnacle of the day. It was always an occasion, as if at a King's command, with the flagship courses tailored to mainstream British tastes: roast lamb, duck and turkey, roast beef and Yorkshire pudding and a most noble Beef Wellington. More than a few men, anticipating the splendours of the table, had sensibly kitted themselves with those excellent elastic-waistband trousers which are so good for morale.

> The men had sensibly kitted themselves out in those excellent trousers with elastic waistbands

We boarded the *Oriana* at Southampton. The procedures were swift and painless and we found ourselves in the heart of the big ship, the four-deck atrium with its stunning 50ft waterfall. We were shown to a comfortable twin-bedded cabin with TV, telephone and fridge and ingeniously-designed bathroom and our luggage had already been delivered.

On deck, we leaned over the rail and watched as we were oompahed off by the red-coated band of the Royal Gloucester, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment. As a first-time cruiser I wondered why such a crowd of people flocked to the library. It was a spectacle to lift any author's heart. I was told: "The old cruising hands get in quickly for the pick of the book crop."

We explored the nine bars and decided that the Lord's Tavern would be our local. It was pleasingly decorated with cricket bats and portraits and a mural of a Test match, though I wished there were an Arlottian murmur in the background rather than pop music. We signed for our drinks (the ship runs a cash-free system) and went in to dinner in one of the two restaurants as Oriana rounded the Isle of Wight.

The restaurant staff set the mood with their smiles. Most of them were from Goa and southern India, in keeping with a 150-year P&O tradition, and some of them were following in their fathers' and grandfathers' footsteps. The wine list was excellent and none of the prices caused a wince. A couple at our table were delighted with the night nursery caring for their young children, enabling them to dine in peace. Bliss. They also said their children liked the junior activities.

The Bay of Biscay, in grumbly mood, made some passengers feel out of sorts, but the sea improved and it was amazing how quickly appetites were restored. We were certainly in good order for the Captain's champagne reception, the first of the formal-dress evenings of the week. Everyone enjoyed dressing up. Waking early, we saw a red Safeway sign shining through the dawn gloom. We had reached Gibraltar. After breakfast we took a turn ashore. Gibraltar seemed pleasantly stuck in about 1950 but we went further back in history, joining a fascinating tour of the tunnels and fortifications in the Rock, pausing to pay our respects to the apes.

The Georgian buildings Nelson knew are still to be seen and, being a Nelson enthusiast, I slipped away from the tour to visit the cemetery where men who died of wounds received at Trafalgar are buried. I had a chance, too, to visit Rosia Bay into which the *HMS Victory* limped for repairs with Nelson's body in a cask of brandy lashed to the mainmast.

Eastward ho, now, a real sunshine cruise. We settled into a routine of pre-breakfast walks along the wraparound promenade deck — the boulevard of teak — followed by swimming, reading, lunching, swimming, reading and afternoon tea.

This exacting regime left no time for deck quoits, tennis, cricket, the golf range and scuba lessons. We sometimes had buffet lunch in the conservatory and contemplated the ship's wake unfurling over the blue Med. At sunset every day we went for a session in the capacious and splendid sauna. I have to confess that we did not use the gleamingly impressive gymnasium but only watched in awe as people raised weights, stretched, ran and pedalled away on the exercise cycles as if, through a complicated chain drive, they were pedalling the mighty *Oriana* at a steady 21 knots. After dinner we were drawn into the fiercely competitive quiz. You need to know the plural of opus (opera) and the characters in the Snoopy cartoons to have any chance of winning the champagne.

Most passengers went dancing, listened to a classical concert or popular piano music, or headed for the cinema, casino or disco. The ship's Theatre Royal was a marvel, every plush seat individually air-conditioned and every plush seat full for the shows. A proper, traditional Northern comedian was part of the ship's Britishness.

More than 1,300 miles out of Southampton, we anchored in crystal blue water off the fishing town of Gythion in southern Greece. Passengers went ashore to explore the shops and tavernas and take tours. We went through Sparta to enjoy the Byzantine glories of medieval Mystras. It was well worth the walk up the rugged hill to see the monastery and churches and the shimmering view over cypresses and orange trees.

We gave a hand to an elderly lady on a steep section of cobbles. "Oh, thanks," she said, "it's a bit difficult with an artificial leg." Oriana people are nothing if not game. I had already seen a chap in his 80s bopping in the ship's disco.

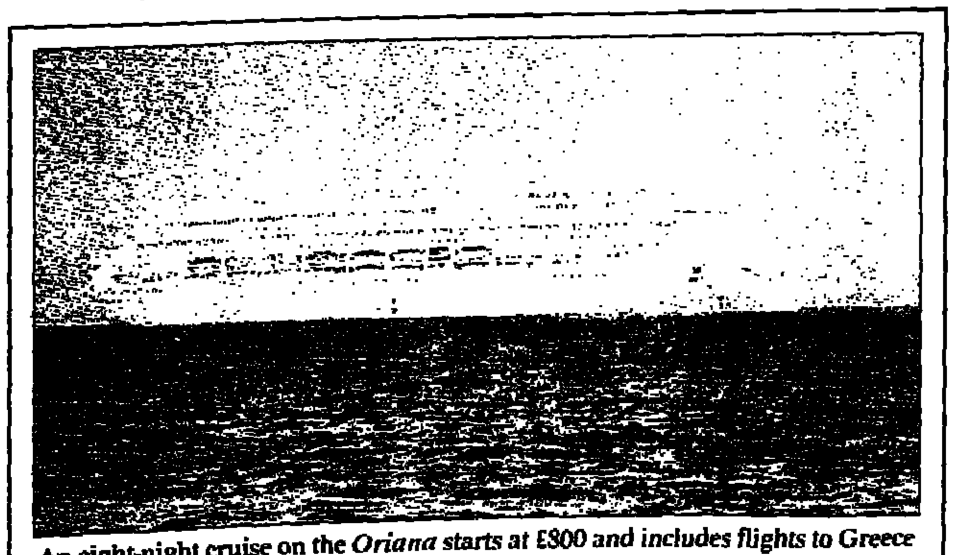
The rig that evening was Hawaiian shirts for men and party kit for women. After dinner a variety show on deck became a Last Night of the Proms, with *Land of Hope and Glory* and streamers falling into the rum punches. We flew home from Athens next day after an all too short week. It was no surprise to us, seeing what pleasures the *Oriana* provided, and how people enjoyed themselves, that cruising is booming. "We're booking for next year," said a fellow passenger. "Can't wait."

TREVOR FISHLOCK

● *The author was a guest of P&O.*

WORLD PICTURES

The marina at Gibraltar and Rosia Bay, into which *HMS Victory* limped for repairs, are the *Oriana's* ports of call


An eight-night cruise on the *Oriana* starts at £800 and includes flights to Greece

FACT FILE

■ The author took a seven-night Aegean Explorer fly-cruise holiday which called at Gibraltar, Gythion and Piraeus with P&O Cruises (0990 726726).

■ Two similar cruises are available this year. From Southampton on September 2, calling at Gibraltar and Nauplia (Greece) before flying home from Piraeus — from £695. The second, eight-night cruise includes flights to Athens on September 9, calling at Zakinthos, Messina and Palma before arriving back in Southampton — from £800.

■ Included in the fares are flights to or from Gatwick/Manchester, transfers, accommodation, meals and activities.

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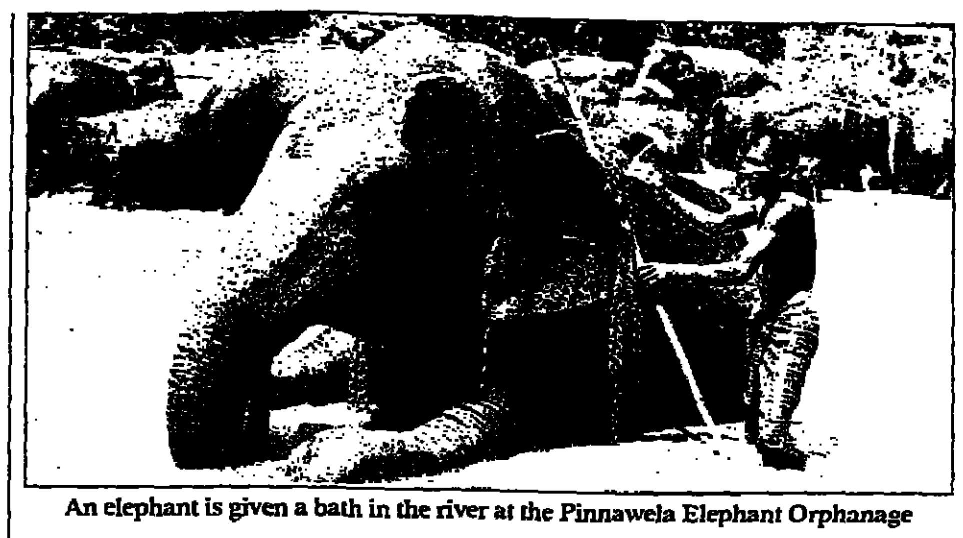
An elephant is given a bath in the river at the Pinnawela Elephant Orphanage

A Caledonian star in her own right

Expedition cruising differs from popular cruising. Popular cruising takes place on large passenger ships resembling a block of flats, which visit the well-known, popular places on a regular itinerary, while the passengers fill in the interval between ports of call with an endless round of entertainment and eating — especially eating.

An expedition cruise is not like that. Expedition cruises go off the too-well-beaten track and if the itinerary has to be changed, no one minds. Take, for example, the *Caledonian Star*. The *CalStar*, as she is known to her countless devotees, is a converted trawler. She is very comfortable indeed but carries only 100 passengers and cruises to the more remote corners of the world, the Galapagos, the islands of Indonesia, the South Seas.

From the *Calstar* the passengers, who tend to be older and fairly well off, sally ashore in rubber Zodiac dinghies to snorkel off remote beaches, visit historic sites, or go into the bush for a guided walk or some birdwatching. That done, it is back on board for splendid meals, interesting lectures and good company.

We picked up the *Caledonian Star* at Madan, a port on the north coast of Sumatra, and sailed for the island of Palau Weh. Palau Weh has a great deal of jungle, spice groves and coconut palms and hardly any people, so we had a pleasant day there before upping anchor and sailing that night for Banda Aceh.

Banda Aceh is known in Sumatra as the Doorway to Mecca, a Muslim pilgrim port since the Middle Ages. Passenger ships and dhows cram the harbour but we arrived on a Friday so most of the attractions were closed. However, there was a good museum and a great bronze bell presented to the local Sultan by the Emperor of China.

Then we got back on the *CalStar* and set out on the four-day voyage to Sri Lanka.

My ideal day afloat was spent reading on a lounger by the pool, but some people like to keep busy. There was snorkelling and aerobics, painting classes and lectures on wildlife and Indian Ocean history.

And so to Sri Lanka. Our entry port was the old Dutch harbour and fortress of Galle, pronounced "Gaul", on the southern tip of the island. Galle is a pretty place, with splendid fortifications, a harbour with brightly-painted fishing boats and the New Oriental Hotel, a quaint, colonial-style place, with barefoot waiters and circling fans.

It was all very pleasant but we had been promised elephants so there was considerable anticipation as we sailed that night for Colombo. Colombo did not detain us long. We crept in with the dawn, disembarked after breakfast and hacked our way through the rush hour onto the road for Kandy, a splendid route, offering magnificent views as it climbs into the mountains, clouds of fruit-bats and, at last, elephants of every size.

Each village between Colombo and Kandy specializes in some form of craft or commodity, so we passed villages devoted to pottery or cane furniture, or pineapples. Young girls in bright saris swarmed onto the bus and sold us a considerable quantity of cashew nuts.

These went down very well when we reached the Elephant Orphanage at Pinnawela. Sri Lanka is full of elephants and those which fall on hard times, lose their mothers, grow old, or fall into traps, usually end up at Pinnawela. There were about 60 of them splashing about in the river, from a hairy baby three months old to a blind old tusker that had been caught terrorising villages and brought here for his own good.

I could have stayed there all day, but we had to get on to Kandy, a pleasant hill town, once a holiday resort for tea planters, now better known for its botanical gardens and the Temple of the Buddha's Tooth. There is also a lake to stroll around but the *CalStar* was calling and we had to get back.

Another day at sea took us to the Maldives, that magical litter of islands, more than 2,000 in all — like jewels in an aquamarine sea. We saw a whale and dolphins and, having anchored inside the reef, went ashore in the Zodiacs for a spot of snorkelling, viewing tropical fish and the occasional questing shark.

Here I got off, taking the helicopter to Soneva Fushi, one of the finest of the resort islands, for a weekend ashore before the flight home. As we flew out two days later we could see the *CalStar* far below, heading for the Seychelles, Aldabra and the African coast, taking her passengers to other places and further adventures. I wish I had been on board.

ROBIN NEILLANDS

● *The author was a guest of Noble Caledonia.*

FACT FILE

■ Noble Caledonia, 11, Charles Street, London, W1X 8LE (0171-409 0376). *An Indian Ocean* Cruise, similar to the one above, costs from £2,995.

■ Soneva Fushi in the Maldives can be booked through Kuoni Holidays of Dorking (01306 740373). A seven-night stay, B&B, costs from £1,091.

■ Travellers to the *Indian Ocean should take a* high factor sun cream and malaria tablets. Snorkelling equipment can be hired locally. Those wishing to scuba dive should take their PADI or BS-AC certificate.

■ Reading: *The Odyssey Guide to Sri Lanka*, by Gillian Wright, (*Odyssey £9.95*); *Travel Survival Kit to Indonesia* (Lonely Planet £14.95).

WORD WATCHING

Answers from page 27

ADAD
(c) An expletive of asseveration or emphasis. *Cf. Egad!*, of which it is probably a variation.
BOURGADE
(b) A village or unwalled town consisting of scattered dwellings. From *bourg*, from the late Latin *burgus*. "A proper little town which of two bourgades is grown, as it were, into one burgh."
AGNOMEN
(c) In Roman antiquity, a second cognomen or fourth name, occasionally assumed by Romans. Hence, loosely, a "to-name" or additional name subsequently acquired. "The generality of grammarians speak of the agnomen as a fourth name superadded to the cognomen or third name, on account of some extraordinary action, virtue or the like: as *Africanus* in Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus."
BUCHEPHALUS
(b) The name of Alexander the Great's famous charger. From the Greek for "ox-head". Hence, applied humorously as the name for any riding-horse, particularly not a very good one.

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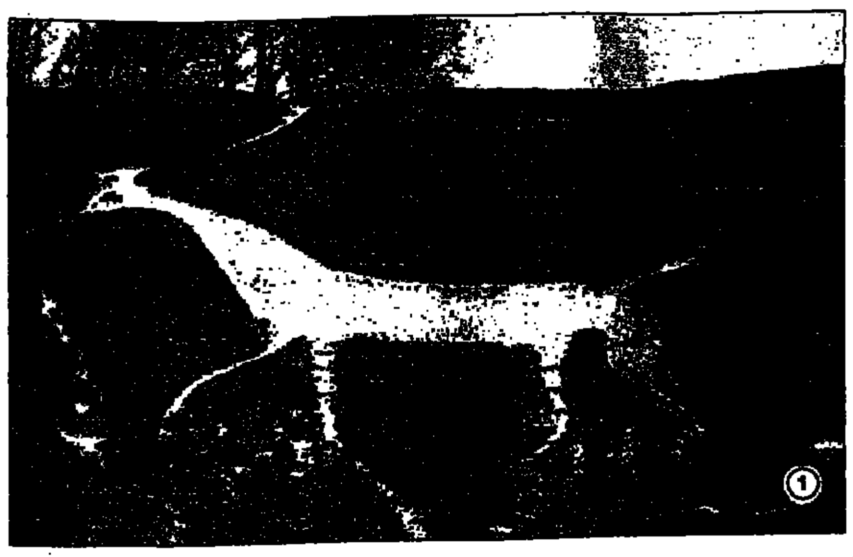
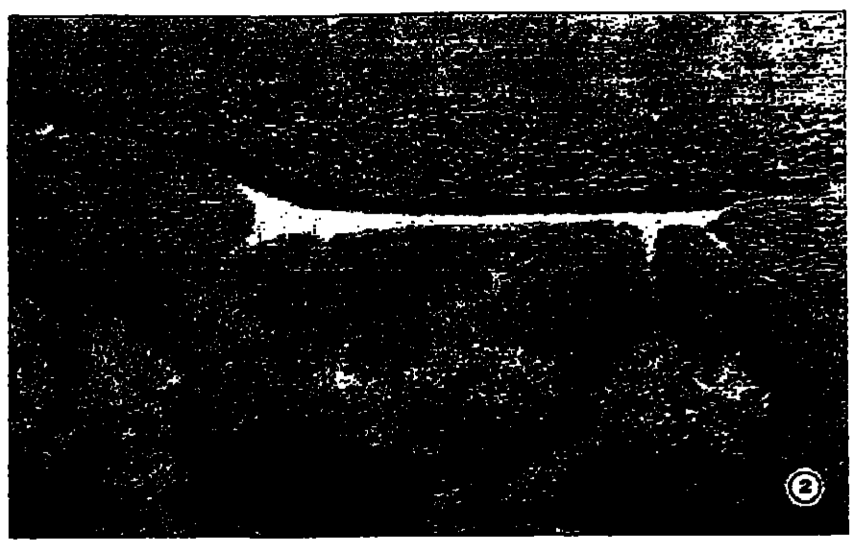
Britain: Seeking an answer to the reason for Wiltshire's white horses is an ideal theme for a touring break

DES JENSON





Mystery of the magnificent seven

BOB COXFORD

Each of the seven white horses of Wiltshire has different history, often celebrating a victory or a coronation, but whatever the reason they remain attractive creations

There is something mystical and even magical about the hill figures of England. Carved into the underlying chalk, there they stand, ancient and modern, realistic or symbolic, staring out across the countryside, stirring the imagination, arousing curiosity and signifying . . . what?

That unanswered question is part of the attraction. The Long Man of Wilmington on the South Downs in East Sussex and the Corfe Giant in Dorset are probably fertility symbols, but what possessed people to carve out the great White Horse at Uffington or the other six white horses that adorn the smooth hillsides of Wiltshire?

The answers vary but the attraction remains. Because all these horses lie within easy reach of the market town of Marlborough, they provide the perfect theme for a car tour or a weekend break, the ideal way of seeing some splendid downland country.

Marlborough used to be a stop on the turnpike road between London and Bath. The Castle and Ball hotel in the High Street, which is the widest high street in Britain, is within easy walking distance of the first white horse, which lies on the hill above Marlborough College.

Follow the banks of the shallow Kennet on the footpath to Preshute and there it is, quite small and elongated, on the hill above the right bank of the river. This white horse was cut in 1804 by the boys of Mr Greasley's School, but the reason for their toil remains unknown.

South of Marlborough lies the Vale of Pewsey, and just south of Pewsey itself, on the road to Upavon, the Pewsey Horse can be seen astride the hill. This is the second horse to stand on this spot, and was carved by the local fire brigade in 1937 to commemorate the coronation of George VI. It replaces one that had been carved in 1785. From the road above the Pewsey Horse there are superb views across the valley, but the horse is in need of a little grooming or it will soon disappear.

The Vale of Pewsey has two white horses and the second one, above the village of Alton Barnes on the south slope of Pewsey Downs, is a large and fine beast, standing at the junction of a score of footpaths, including the Wansdyke, the Ridgeway and the Tan Hill Way, which runs along the ridge top from Pewsey.

The Alton Barnes Horse was carved in 1812 by Robert Pile, a local farmer. Mr Pile had paid a contractor £20 for the work to be done, but the man made off with the money and was later hanged for theft.

Great views are the bonus of touring the white horses and few views are finer than the one from the crest of the hill above the White Horse of Bratton, near Westbury. This is the oldest white horse in Wiltshire, carved in 1778, but replaces a much earlier horse which stood on the same site since before 1066.

Legend has it that the original Bratton horse was carved to celebrate King Alfred's victory over the Danes at Ethandun in 878, but it may have been much older. Wiltshire is seamed with ancient trackways and Iron Age hill forts, one of which crowns Bratton Hill, and the horse may simply indicate the location of the fortress.

North now, past Devizes, and on a side road towards Calne for a view of the next white horse, cut into the hillside above the A4 road at Cherhill. This was carved in 1780 by a team of men working under the orders of Dr Alsopp of Calne, who stood on the road below and directed operations through a megaphone. Cherhill and its horse now belong to the National Trust, and the horse can be reached up a footpath from the road.

Head east from Cherhill towards Marlborough and Hackpen Hill soon comes into view, spanning the skyline to the north supporting the Ridgeway Path — and yet another horse. Turn off at Avebury for Swindon, passing through the stone circles, and this horse can be made out on the slope of Hackpen Hill, just beside the road from Broad Hinton to Marlborough. This small horse was carved out by the parish clerk of Broad Hinton in 1838 to commemorate the recent coronation of Victoria, but unless the present clerk summons a working party to clean and dress it, this horse will soon fade into the grass.

From Hackpen Hill it is a pleasant drive over the top to complete a tour around the horses of about 80 miles, but the last and most striking horse lies to the northeast, just over the Wiltshire county line.

This is the ancient White Horse of Uffington, which has been striding the slopes of White Horse Hill for at least 900 years. It may have been carved by the orders of Hengist, the Saxon chieftain, about 1,500 years ago, or by King Alfred to celebrate his victory at Ashdown in 871. It may even be older: *Before the Gods that made the Gods had seen their sunrise pass, the White Horse of the White Horse Vale was cut out of the Grass*, wrote Chesterton, and he may well have been right.

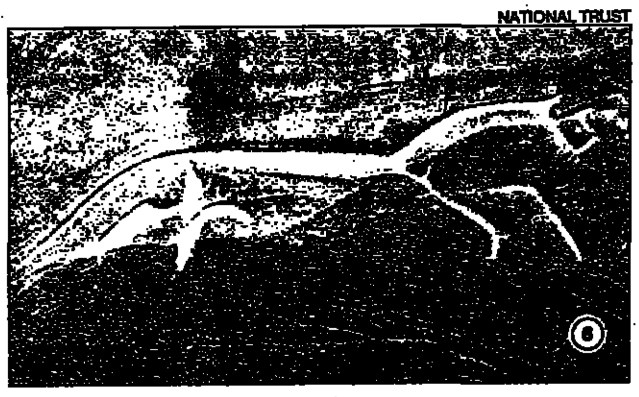
These horses may have been carved to celebrate a victory or a coronation, to enhance the view or to indulge a whim. Whatever the reason, there they are today, cantering out of the distant past towards an uncertain future. The real reason hardly matters any more, and if all they do is provide a breezy view and a good theme for a day in the country, they remain worthwhile and splendid creations. We should have more of them; and perhaps the coming millennium celebrations will see a a new white horse carved on our hillsides, gracing the green slopes of England for a thousand years to come.

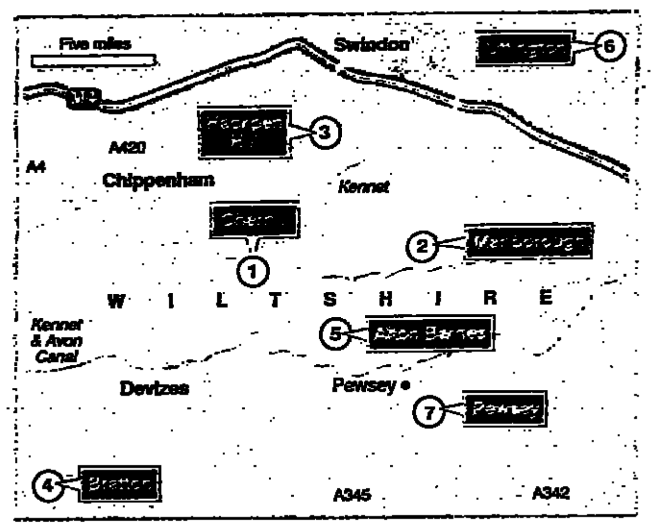
ROBIN NEILLANDS

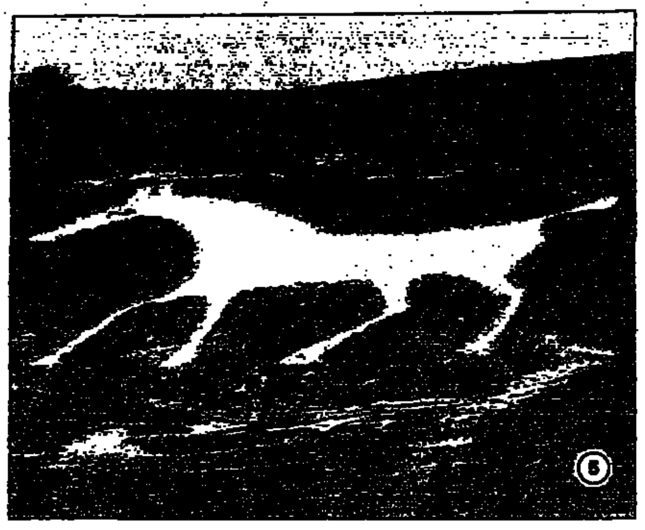
FACT FILE

- The Castle and Ball Hotel, Marlborough (01672 515201), offers two-night weekend leisure breaks from £59 a head per night, including dinner. The Seven Stars Inn, Bottlesford, near Pewsey (01672 851325), also has accommodation.
- A helpful leaflet, "A tour of the White Horses of Wiltshire and Uffington", by J. and M. Young (25p), is available from the Tourist Information Centre, George Street Car Park, Marlborough (01672 513989), which can also provide further information on accommodation in the area.
- The White Horse close to Marlborough can be found on OS maps 1:25,000 scale Nos 1169, 1185, 1201.
- The route between Uffington and the Bratton Horse, taking in all the Wiltshire horses, could be covered in about a week on footpaths or about two days on mountain bikes. The total distance, on minor roads, is about 100 miles.

NATIONAL TRUST







TRAVEL TIPS

- *LEISURE GOLF* (0155-734 5200) has a four-day ladies-only golf tour of Shannonside in Ireland starting on May 13 for £429. Price includes two rounds of golf at Shannon Golf Club and Dromoland Castle in Newmarket-on-Fergus and a medieval banquet at Bunratty Castle. Three nights at the four-star Bunratty Shamrock Hotel includes breakfast, two dinners and use of leisure facilities.
- CHILTERN Trains (01844 353500) has a garden tour of Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire on July 28 from £290. Based for four nights at the three-star Spread Eagle Hotel at Thame, Oxfordshire, the tour includes visits to Westperry Gardens, Rousham Park, Gardens of the Rose, Chenies Manor and Broughton Castle. Price includes rail travel, coaches, half-board and admissions.
- THE Scottish Tourist Board (0990 511511) offers two-for-one Short Breaks until May 22, including two nights at the four-crown Cromlix House hotel in Kinbuck in Perthshire for £145 (two people sharing plus breakfast).
- SUPERBREAK Mini-Holidays (0161-238 5257) has Royal Ascot Ladies Day (June 19) packages for £115 each. Includes admission to Tattersalls at Royal Ascot and one night's shared accommodation at the four-star Excelsior Hotel near Heathrow, plus breakfast and transfer.
- HF Holidays (0181-905 9388) offers seven-day guided walking tours of the Glens of Nevis and Glencoe in Scotland on June 21 from £334. Based for seven nights at Loch Leven House near Fort William, the tour takes in Loch Linnhe and Lismore Island. Price includes full board and transport to and from walks.
- HUNT antique furniture in the Cotswolds with John Harvey, a director of Sotheby's, for five days from June 29 for £740. The hunt includes advice and lectures with tours of Tetbury, Cirencester, Bath and Stow-on-the-Wold, plus five nights at the four-crown Calcot Manor hotel in Tetbury. Ring 01666 890391.

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Jp Mis 150

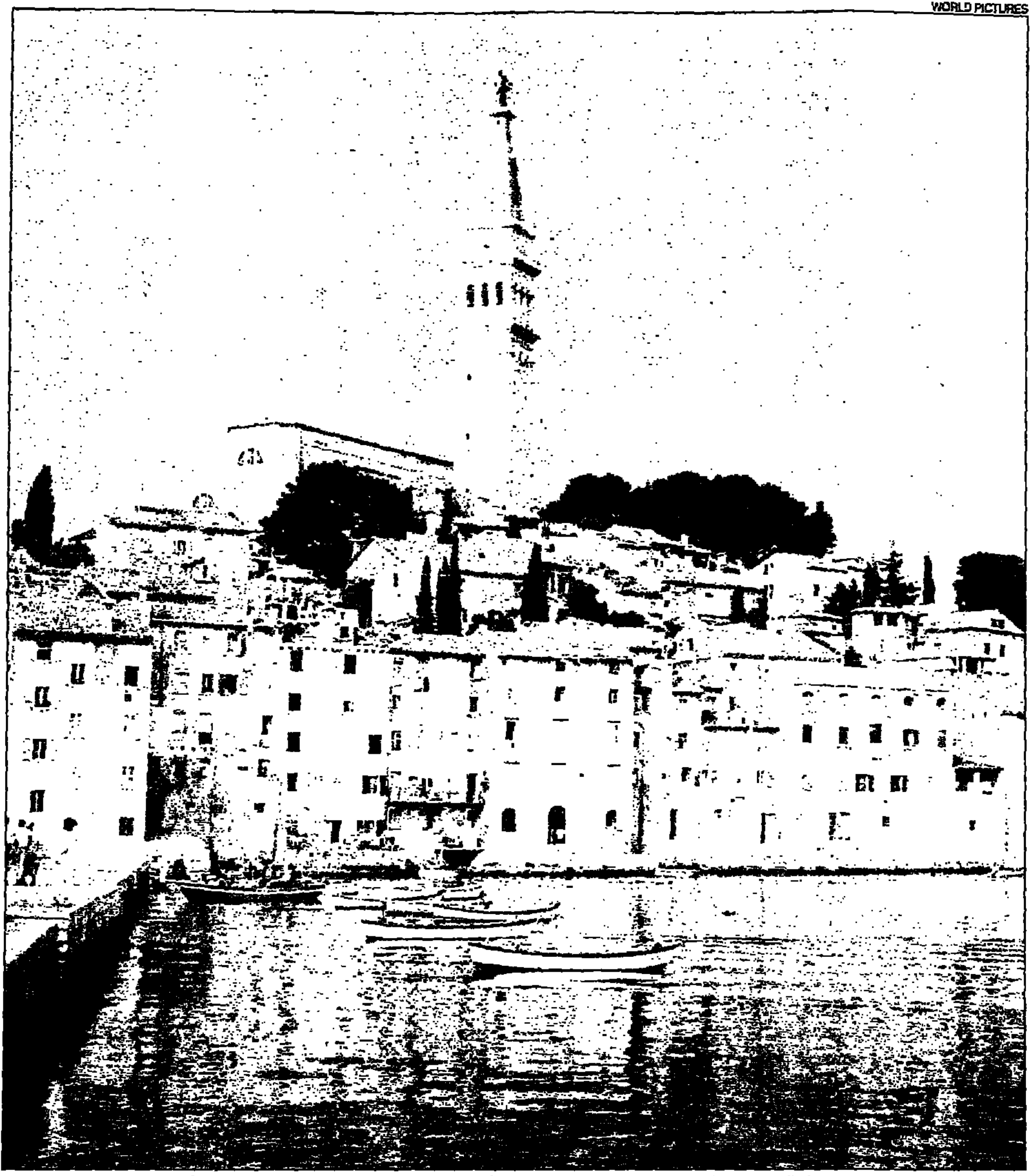
AROUND THE WORLD: A WEEKEND GUIDE

Cruising off Croatia

JOINING Jadrolinja Lines's network of ferries this year, the 6,000 tonne *Dubrovnik* bought from Brittany Ferries where she was known as *Duchesse Anne*, offers some of Europe's cheapest and most beautiful island-hopping among the 1,185 islands off Croatia's indented coastline.

The voyage from Rijeka in the north to Dubrovnik in the south, which takes 18-24 hours, costs $28 (about £17.50) on deck, $35 (£21.90) for a reclining seat, with a cabin sleeping four from $60 (£37.50) per person. (Tickets can often be bought more cheaply on the spot.) You can stop off at individual islands en route, where overnight B&B in private homes costs £7 a night, £25 in hotels, and continue your journey later.

Most routes include the picturesque island of Hvar, and Marco Polo's birthplace, Korcula, where the spirited old Moreska sword dance is performed on summer weekends. Hour-long stops at Split allow holidaymakers to walk along the waterfront to Diocletian's Palace. Information from DIT Travel (0171-379 6249)



WORLD PICTURES

The picturesque port of Rovinj in Croatia, whose coastline offers some of the cheapest holidays available in Europe this summer

Afloat in a sea of luxury

LOTTERY winners or the seriously rich can acquire a taste for a life at sea on board *Leander*, the largest and most lavish motor yacht offered for charter in the yachting holiday programme of Elegant Resorts (01244 897006).

At 245ft long, *Leander* comes complete with a crew member for each of the 20 passengers, 14 bathrooms, a hobiecat, a laser dinghy and a Zodiac inflatable, as well as windsurfers, a pool, a fitness room, a film and music library — and also a bill for £11,430 per person for a week's sailing round the Caribbean.

More modest offerings are available from £1,030 for each of six sailing enthusiasts sharing a 63ft yacht, while well-heeled families might choose the wooden 80ft *Satori of London*, with accommodation for eight holidaymakers, adaptable for babies and young children (menus include "Jurassic Jello" and "Boo Boo's Brownies"). A week around the Virgin Islands costs £1,125 per person, all prices exclusive of flights.

Visa-free

WITH THE latest announcement that citizens of the EU and Switzerland visiting Bulgaria as tourists for 30 days or less do not require a visa, the former Iron Curtain countries that now offer unrestricted tourist entry to British subjects include Hungary, Romania, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania. Albania has a $5 entry fee, but Russia, Ukraine and Belarus still have visa formalities that take at least two weeks.

Golf academy

ASPIRING golfers may have the best equipment and a swing to dream about, but still fail to play as well as Tiger Woods; perhaps the "Mind Academy of Golf" run by Jos Vanstiphout, who has worked with players such as Roger Davies and Gordon Brand Jr, has the solution.

La Cala Golf Resort in Mijas Costa near Malaga (00 345 266 9000) is a five-star hotel resort with two 18-hole championship courses and many other golfing facilities. Tuition, three nights' full board accommodation and two rounds of golf cost £550 in November.

For those preferring to watch rather than play, BAC Sport (0171-456 7101) offers tailor-made packages to the Ryder Cup in Valderrama, Spain, between September 26-28, starting at £284.

■ STENA LINE (0990 707070) has relaunched its fast 600-passenger, 135-minute ferry service between Newhaven and Dieppe, the most picturesque Channel port in France, costing from £122-£158 for a five-day return, £216-£294 for a regular return. There is a 25 per cent discount for bookings made and paid for before the end of this month. On the Dover-Calais route, Stena reverts to a four-ship operation from May 13, offering 20 return sailings a day.

Vive le jazz

IF YOU are in Armagnac this summer looking around the Romanesque churches, the châteaux, the vineyards and the small fortified towns, once medieval power bases of France's fragmented aristocracy, it may be worth taking a diversion down the D3 to Marciac, northeast of Pau between Plaisance and Mielan.

This off-the-beaten-track town is the unlikely venue for the annual Jazz in Marciac Festival, when it plays host to some of the most famous names in the world of jazz. This year at its 20th festival, taking place between August 7-17, the line-up is headed by Manhattan Transfer, Ray Charles and Oscar Peterson.

The arcaded 13th-century market square becomes one open-air restaurant, and since Marciac has no concert hall or even cinema, a huge triple-decker marquee is erected on the outskirts.

Booking for the main concerts is essential (telephone 00 335 62093333; fax 00 335 62093867), but there are free open-air performances which take place from morning until late at night.

JILL CRAWSHAW'S TRAVEL TIPS

Paris retreat

A HOUSEBOAT moored on the River Marne, six miles by car from Notre Dame, 20 miles from Paris Disneyland, and on a direct Métro line to the Opéra and Place de la Concorde, could offer a relaxing retreat after a day's hard sightseeing in Paris. The houseboat is available for rent for four to six people costing £925 a week from International Chapters (0171-722 0722).

The firm also offers centrally located apartments which provide an economical alternative to costly hotels, and an excuse to plunder food markets such as Rue Mouffetard and Rue Lepic, as well as the top people's store, Fauchon in Place de la Madeleine. A Latin Quarter studio for two costs £550 a week, a Montmartre apartment for three in a cobbled street near the Place du Tertre costs £650, while a luxurious Ile St Louis apartment in an 18th-century building costs eight people £3,850. All prices are per property, per week.

■ THERE are opportunities in July and September to join Russian anti-poaching units in Siberia to help protect the Siberian tiger. Staying in cabins or under canvas, with local Udege tribesmen and research experts, the two-week conservation holidays from Discovery Initiatives (0171-229 9881) cost £3,575 per person, all-inclusive. Travel is in ex-army trucks, boats, Trans-Siberian trains and on foot, and reasonable fitness is required.

Coalport hostel

THE NEW YHA Hostel within the original Coalport China Works offers accommodation mainly in two to five-bedded rooms, with facilities for wheelchair users. Two nights' full-board at Coalport, or the nearby Ironbridge Youth Hostel, costs £64 for adults, £50 for under-18s. This also includes a passport to eight Ironbridge Gorge Museums, Cadbury's World and the Severn Valley Railway, as well as the Ironbridge Toy Museum and Victorian Police Station.

Annual membership of the YHA (01727 855215) is £9.50 for adults, £3.50 for under-18s, £19 for family membership and £9.50 for one-parent families.

■ A POCKET directory of French golf courses is free from the French Tourist Office, 178 Piccadilly, London W1V 0AL or by post from French Information (0891 244123).

Greek dreams

LUXURY HOMES and small hotels, which the Greek Islands Club (01932 220477) says will appeal to those who do not want a package holiday, form the basis of the firm's "Private Collection". Villa Helios in Hydra is reached by a 15-minute uphill walk or donkey taxi. It has views across the Saronic Gulf to the Peloponnese and costs £736 per week for each of four sharing. The Villa Kynthia is a restored 1898 home in the Cretan village of Panormo; now a hotel, it costs £730 per week. All prices exclude flights.

Return trip with VJV

LETTERS continue to pour in regarding the tour operator Voyages Jules Verne (VJV) following the publication of a complaint from the Glazers of Hertfordshire, who took a holiday to Cuba. They wrote of flight delays, having to change hotels at their own expense and dirty rooms. VJV replied that the local advice was to switch hotels, and suggested the couple were not suited to Cuba. Subsequent letters to Weekend include:

From Franco De Giorgi of Purley, Surrey: "Two days before travelling to Cuba with VJV, I read with apprehension the letter 'Cuban Doss House Drama'. I have just returned and am pleased with the experience, which I intend to repeat. The service and cleanliness in the hotel was first-class, with fresh bedsheets and towels every day and plenty of hot water. We did not see one cockroach, dead or alive. In Havana, none of our group witnessed any mugging or violence. I found in Havana some friendly, warm people with pride and dignity. Anybody going to Cuba would be well advised to read something about the conditions the people are living in and they exist in the first place."

From Karen Westmacott, London SW3: "Unable to get an answer on the telephone from VJV, I wrote for details of a trip. Heard nothing for months, phoned again, got a nice man who said they had a terrible postal service and he had not had my letter. Received a brochure, filled in the form and sent it off. Weeks later, heard nothing so I phoned. Stroppy girl, obviously not had my booking, made no attempt to renew it. Thoroughly unsatisfactory."

From Ida Staples, Huntingdon: "I did the VJV Royal Cities of Rajasthan tour in January. It was efficiently run, comprehensive and well thought-out. The flight used was Monarch, designed for midgets — even that was mitigated by a break at Bahrain."

From Joanna Mitchell of Kingston, Surrey: "On our Nile cruise with the baksheesh [tipping] expected. Our problem was not with the children or people in the street, but with the guide, an Egyptian woman. She didn't wait for a tip but asked our party of 50 for £7 per person for the week. She also asked for £10 for a boat trip. Please advise those going to Egypt to give to the poor but not to pay over the odds to a hard-nosed guide."

● *We welcome letters on holiday travel. Send them to: Letters, Travel Department, The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN or fax 0171-782 5124.*

France booming

TRAVEL NEWS

■ **THE STRENGTH** of sterling against the franc is reflected in a 41 per cent rise in the number of ferry passengers travelling through Dover in the first quarter of 1997. More than 3.9 million used the port, with car numbers up by 34 per cent, coaches 28 per cent.

Some of the growth is attributed to the Channel Tunnel fire in November, which has seen passengers switch to the ferries. But March figures show that, despite only operating at half-capacity, Le Shuttle has bounced back. More than 149,000 cars used the service last month, only 3,000 fewer than the same month in 1996.

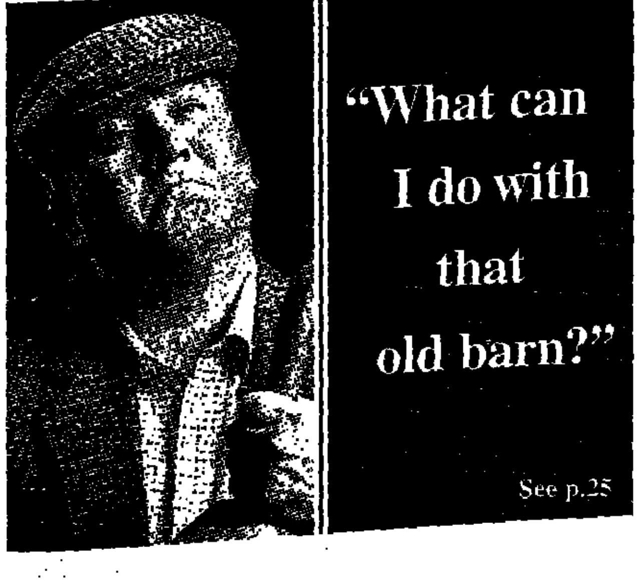
The growing demand for France is primarily fuelled by shopping and short breaks. More than half of all stays are less than five days.

■ **BAVARIA** is staging a campaign this summer to attract more British holidaymakers, buoyed by figures showing a 5.5 per cent increase to more than 250,000 visitors from the UK last year. With sterling having gained 20 per cent against the mark within a year, typical prices in Bavaria have fallen to about £15 per person for B&B.

The region is highlighting its spa towns and the Alps for family-based holidays, and city breaks for couples. But it is also promoting eco-tourism. More than 300 special events are planned this summer. For more information, contact the German National Tourist Office (0171-493 0080).

■ **NEW CHARTER** operator Canada World (0171-487 5877) has Toronto flights for £149 return on selected dates in May, from Gatwick, Manchester and Glasgow.

■ **THE CARAVAN CLUB** reports an "almost unprecedented interest" in continental holidays, up 20 per cent on last year. "Popular destinations in France this year are the Atlantic coast, Brittany and the Loire valley," said Arlene Spicer, the club's travel service manager.


"What can I do with that old barn?"
See p.25

Times reader **Pat Dean** on her holiday to Ecuador

Enchanted rainforest

Lago Agrio is a booming oil town in eastern Ecuador, true Peter-Sellers-in-South-America territory, where even the lowliest official sports a flashy uniform with golden epaulettes, careers around in an army vehicle and carries a big gun.

The travel company's luxury bus was "waiting for spares", so my son Joe and I boarded a boneshaker with tiny fixed windows, no suspension, no air-conditioning, a psychedelic colour scheme and a mad driver.

Jolting eastwards along very rough dirt roads in the steaming heat, we shed civilisation as the hours passed. Then the road ran out and we boarded high-speed canoes to travel for 150km down the Aguarico River towards our home from home — a riverboat hotel.

However, the canoe broke down and we had to wait for an hour to be rescued, helplessly swept along, round and round in midstream, hours from our destination.

The muddy brown swirling river, 10ft deep and sometimes half a kilometre wide, is full of huge, partly submerged logs stuck in the bottom, their jagged ends sticking out of the water. It is also home to Cayman crocodiles and piranha fish.

Precariously transferring canoes mid-river, we arrived at our riverboat hotel at dusk feeling absolutely exhausted. Finally locating our tiny, stifling cabin, we first had to eject an enormous moth or middling-sized bat (we did not look too closely), before falling asleep.

Parrots are in abundance

At 6am, the boat cruised slowly down the river close to the bank. By 6.20am I had seen five different kinds of macaw, hundreds of parrots, a toucan and some howler monkeys. The parrots flew overhead in huge whirring flocks and screeched like mad.

There was absolutely no interference from mankind except for the occasional Indian hut built of grass, wood and bamboo, standing on stilts to keep out floods and snakes.

The travel company had built a three-mile boardwalk through the jungle. It rots away continuously and has to be repainted all the time, like the Forth Bridge.

The handrail was slimy and the guide had to remove a large snake and several 5in-long fluffy white caterpillars, shaped like Toblerone chocolate bars and looking exactly like miniature Dougals.

There were towering mahogany trees, giant fig trees with huge buttresses like rocket fins holding them up, and Tarzan-handy lianas (air roots) hanging down. Scarlet flowers as big as dinner plates blossomed, and all the usual garden centre exotica were growing in great profusion.

The butterflies were huge, brilliant and metallic-coloured, flopping about between us, landing on any brightly coloured item of clothing.

Halfway up a tree, a termite mound sat alongside a bees' nest. The guide shouted, and a loud rhythmic thumping noise from the tree suddenly filled the air. The bees were warning the termites of danger by buzzing their wings, and the termites would protect them in return (or was it the other way round?).

A tower had been built for us up a giant "emergent" tree so that we could look out over the top of the rainforest. As I swept my binoculars over the tree tops, a pair of gorgeous scarlet macaws flew into my sights and glided slowly over the sunlit green canopy — the most unforgettable sight of the trip.

Fireflies, flashing at nightfall, made it look as if there was a huge city just behind the trees with its brilliant lights being intermittently eclipsed by the leaves as we moved by.

On the way home, the guide was a Cofan Indian, built like Mike Tyson. He sat high on the canoe prow as it roared up the river, indicating left and right with his enormous hands to the "blind" steerer at the back to avoid the jagged logs and sandbanks.

Pink river dolphins played around our boat — sightless and without pigment because of the opaque water they live in — with nothing to see and no chance of sunburn.

● *The author comes from Hoveringham, Nottinghamshire*

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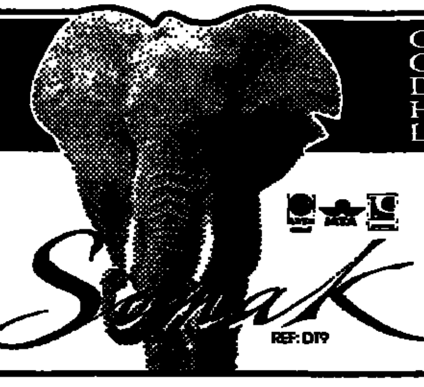

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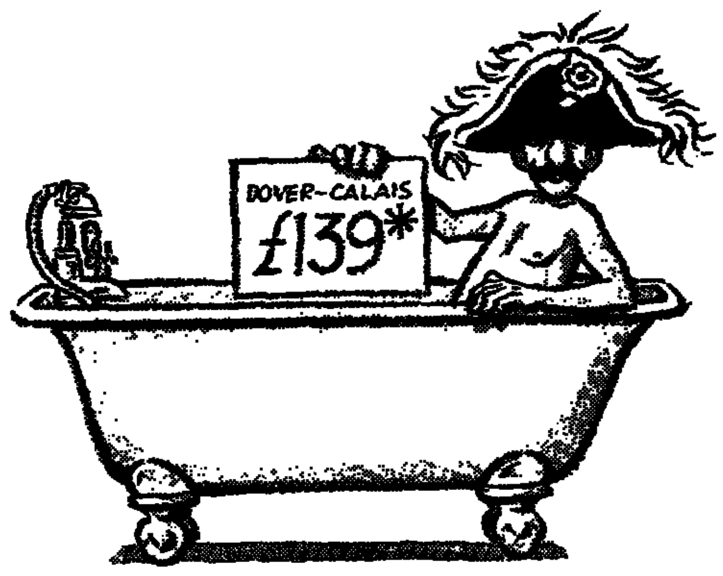

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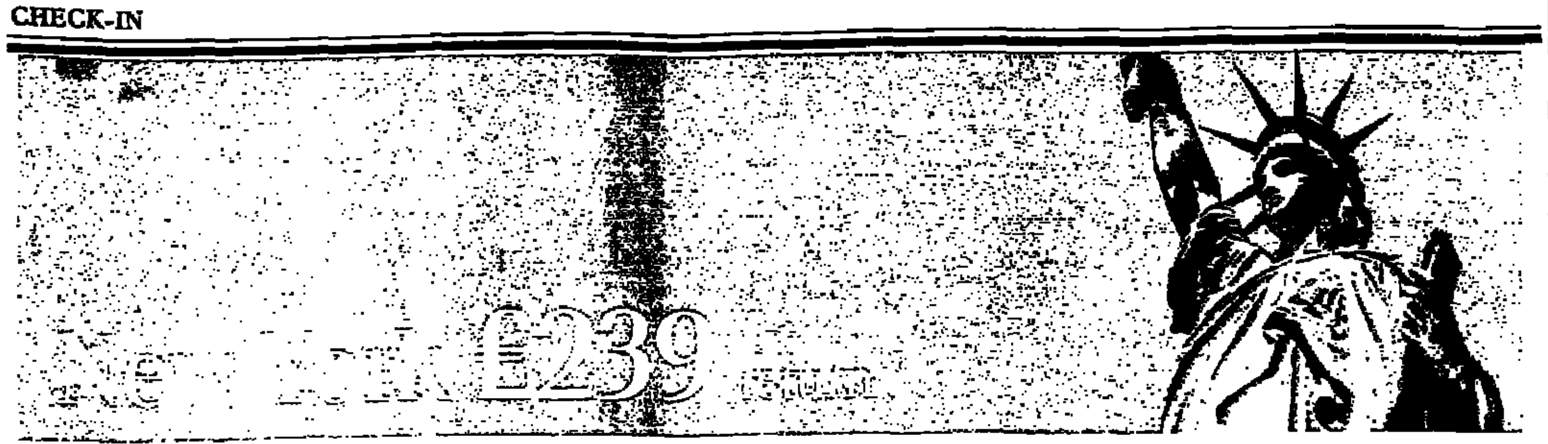

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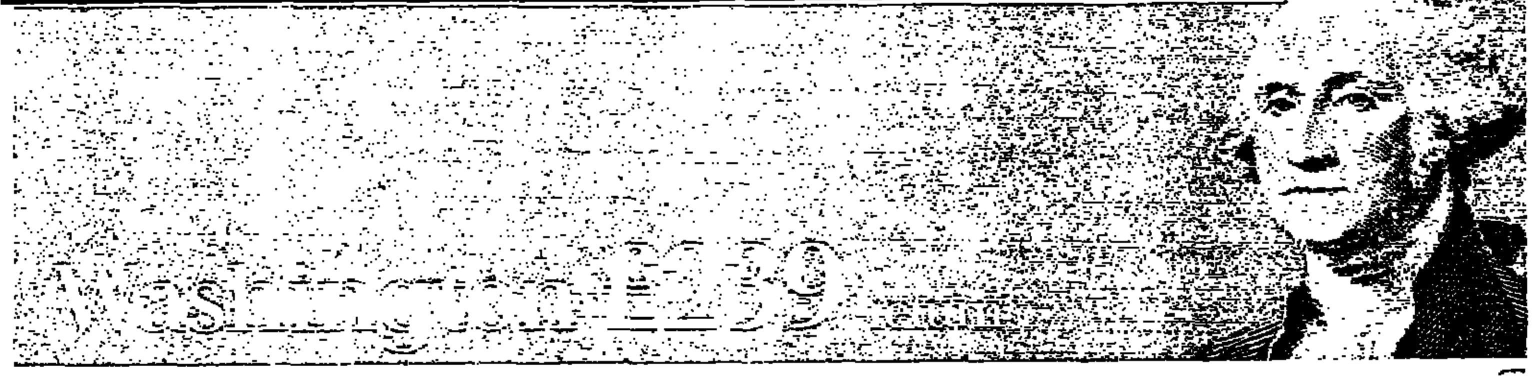

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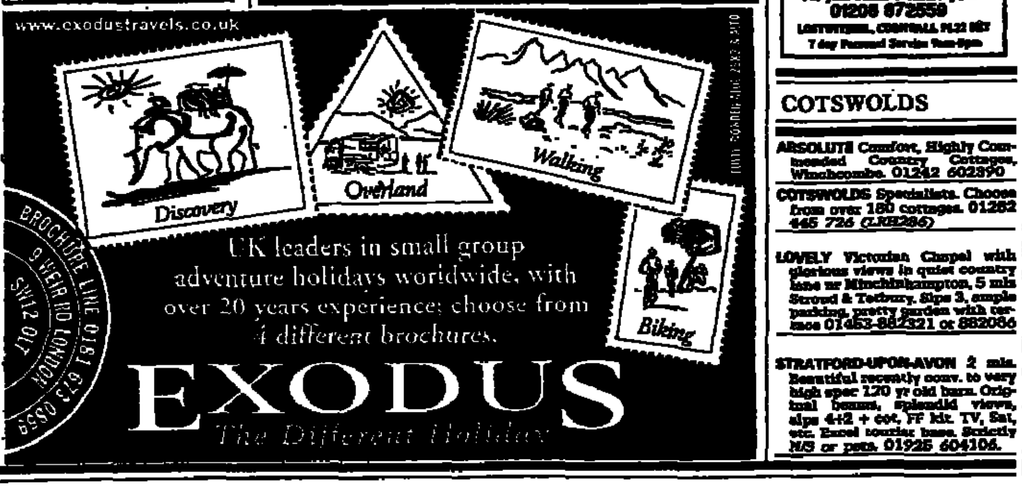

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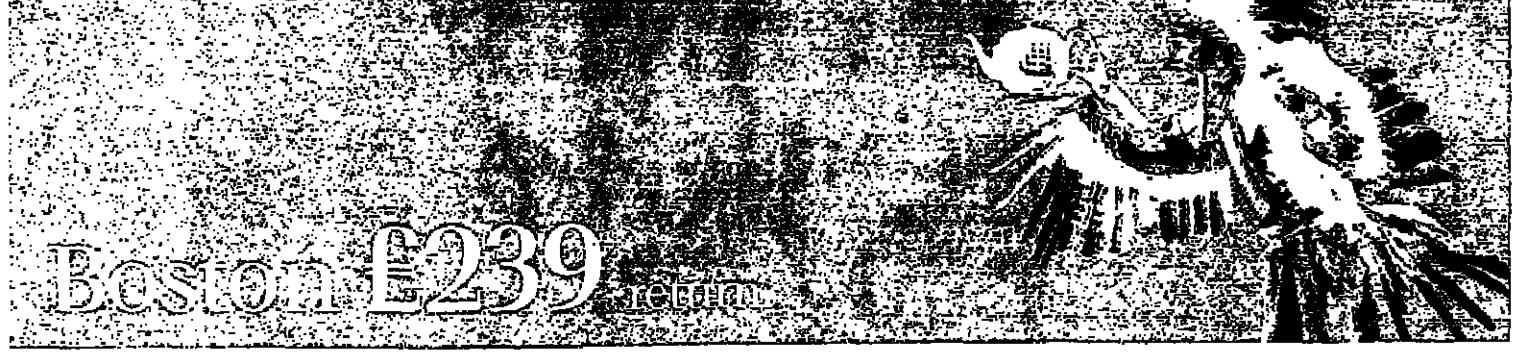

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CHESS

by Raymond Keene

THE forthcoming challenge in New York, starting early May, between Garry Kasparov and IBM's Deep Blue Mark II computer, may well prove to be a benchmark in the public perception of chess. For last year's match between the two, which Kasparov won by 4 points to 2, the computer was able to visualise 500 million different positions per second. Now, the IBM boffins have raised this to a staggering 1 billion per second. The prize fund has more than doubled too, to $1.1 million. Last year's match brought IBM $200 million worth of publicity and six million hits on the Internet for the final game.

This year, the global publicity has already been intense, including a two-page feature in *Time* magazine and predictions by IBM that there will be 20 million Internet hits per day. Given that the Atlanta 1996 Olympics only attracted 10 million hits in all, this suggests that this may be the chess match of the century, dwarfing even Fischer-Spassky in its penetration of the public consciousness worldwide.

Last year I predicted before the match that Kasparov would win by 4 points to 2, and that was indeed the outcome. This year, even given the machine's improved capacity, I feel that Kasparov's valuable experience from the contest a year ago will still enable him to come out on top. Once again, I predict a 4-2 victory for Kasparov. Here is one of his wins from a year ago.

W: Deep Blue; B: Kasparov
Philadelphia, 1996
Scotch Opening

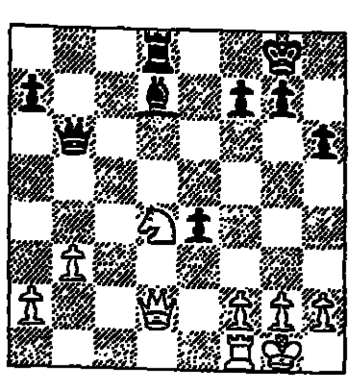
1	e4	e5	2	Nf3	Nf6
3	Nc3	Nc6	4	d4	exd4
5	Nxd4	Bb4	6	Nxc6	bxc6
7	Bd3	d5	8	exd5	cxd5
9	0-0	0-0	10	Bg5	c6
11	Qf3	Be7			

In many games from this match a trade by a white bishop on g5 against a black knight on f6 led to insurmountable pawn weaknesses for the defender. Here Kasparov avoids this.

12 Rae1	Re8	13 Ne2	h6
14 Bf4	Bd6	15 Nd4	Bg4
16 Qg3			

Not 16 Nxc6, speculating on tactics arising from the mutually attacked queens, since 16 . . . Qc7 nets a piece in broad daylight.

16 . . .	Bxf4	17 Qxf4	Qb6
18 c4	Bd7	19 cxd5	cxd5
20 Rxe8+	Rxe8	21 Qd2	Ne4
22 Bxe4	dxe4	23 b3	Rd8



Here Kasparov offered a draw which Deep Blue, courtesy of its resident grandmaster on the team, Joel Benjamin, unwisely declined.

24 Qc3 f5 25 Rd1? (Better is 25 b4.) **25 . . . Be6.** Black is gradually gaining the upper hand: e6 is an excellent square for his bishop and White can no longer trade knight for bishop since his knight on d4 is pinned to his rook on d1.

26 Qe3 Bf7 27 Qc3 f4. The computer program cannot see a way to improve its position and therefore simply repeats moves. This gives Kasparov the time he needs. *28 Rd2 Qf6* pins White's knight from another direction.

29 g3	Rd5	30 a3	Kh7
31 Kg2	Qe5	32 f3	

A dreadful move to have to make, but by now the threat of . . . e3 had, in any case, become overwhelming, while 32 gxf4 Qxf4 leaves White's king far too exposed.

32 . . . e3 33 Rd3 e2. This wins a piece after which White could safely resign.

34 gxf4	e1Q	35 fxe5	Qxc3
36 Rxc3	Rxd4	37 b4	Bc4
38 Kf2	g5	39 Re3	Be6
40 Rc3	Bc4	41 Re3	Rd2+
42 Ke1	Rd3	43 Kf2	Kg6
44 Rxd3	Bxd3	45 Ke3	Bc2
46 Kd4	Kf5	47 Kd5	h5

White resigns.

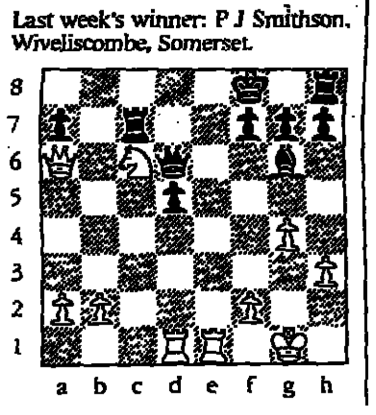
WINNING MOVE

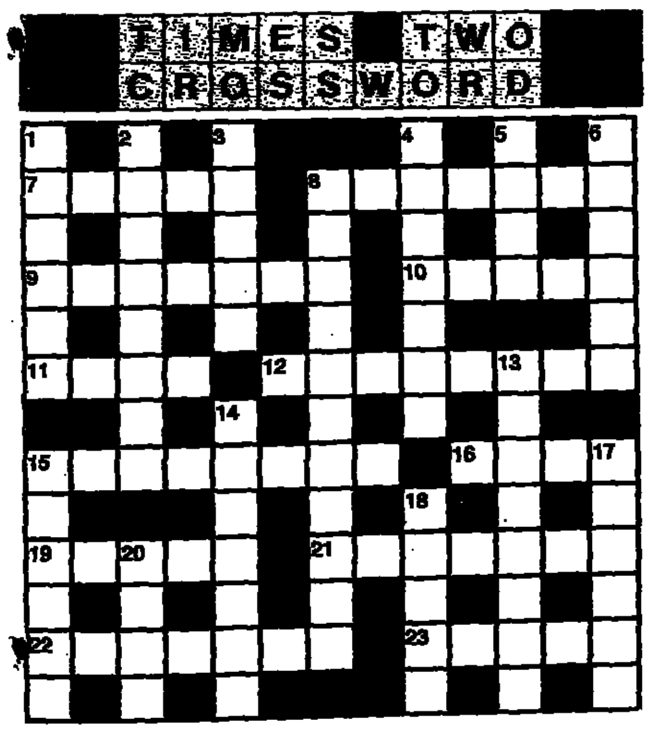
By Raymond Keene

White to play. This position is from the game Keitlinghaus - Miles, Bad Worishofen 1997. White, having displaced the black king, has a very strong initiative. However, he appears to have a problem with the pin against his knight on c6. How did he solve this problem in fine style? Send your answer on a postcard to *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. The first correct answer drawn on Thursday will win a year's subscription to the Staunton Society, which includes a free invitation to the annual dinner at Simpson's-in-the-Strand. The answer will be published next Saturday.

Last week's solution: 1 Bxg7+

Last week's winner: P J Smithson, Wiveliscombe, Somerset.





No 1072

ACROSS
- 7 *Haul up* (5)
- 8 Childish (7)
- 9 Vagrant: fishing boat (7)
- 10 Be almost as good as (5)
- 11 *Show one is bored* (4)
- 12 Omnipotent (8)
- 15 Undeviating (8)
- 16 Go under; give out (4)
- 19 Be envious of (5)
- 21 Unshakeable; a hard stone (7)
- 22 Available only to top group (7)
- 23 *Red, yellow pigment* (5)

DOWN
- 1 Poor quality (yarn) (6)
- 2 1642 (Eng.), 1861 (US) event (5,3)
- 3 Nation: aver (5)
- 4 New joiner (7)
- 5 Ukraine capital (4)
- 6 John —, Methodist founder (6)
- 8 US mil. decoration: drug tablet (6,5)
- 13 Husband of *Minnehaha* (8)
- 14 *Queue* (7)
- 15 For religious use (6)
- 17 Mail item: landlord (6)
- 18 Shaver: Occam's tool (5)
- 20 Vacuum; invalid (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1071

ACROSS: 1 Cashpoint 6 Hit 8 Room 101 9 By-law 10 Nuts 11 Old guard 13 Conrad 14 Sandal 17 Postcard 18 Pout 20 Ahead 21 Trainee 22 Hut 23 Glengarry

DOWN: 1 Chronic 2 Short and sweet 3 Phiz 4 Icicle 5 Toboggan 6 Hole-and-corner 7 Towed 12 Watchdog 15 Lottery *16 Writhe 17 Plath* 19 Pang

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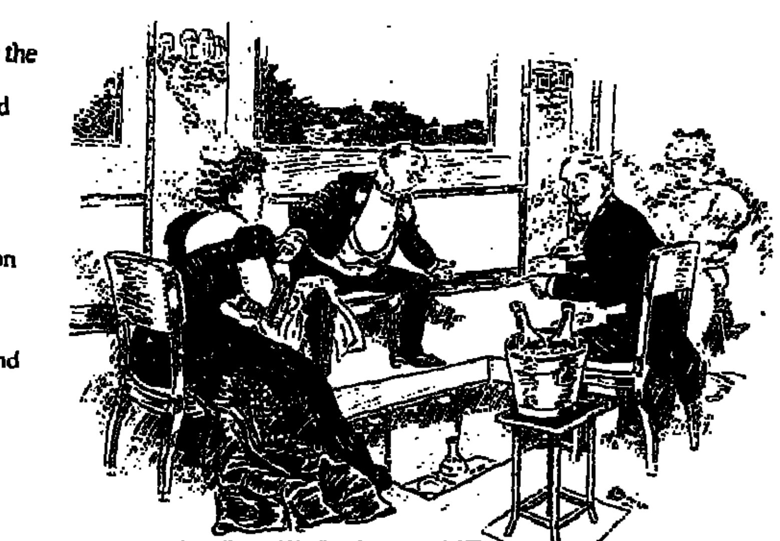
PUNCHLINE

READERS are invited to write an amusing caption for the cartoon (right), from *The Strand Magazine* (reproduced from Westminster Libraries, Sherlock Holmes Collection, Marylebone Library).

The cartoon will be printed again next week with a caption from those submitted.

Send caption suggestions on a postcard with your name and address to: *Strand Caption 48*, Weekend, *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN.

The Editor's decision is final. The closing date for entries is Wednesday, April 23.



THE TABLE DISAPPEARS FOR AN INSTANT: BUT WHY SHOULD THE CONVERSATION FLAG?

"For the last time Perkins, the orgasm pills are for the female staff only"

The winning caption for last week's cartoon (above) was submitted by R.Challinor of Walton-on-the-Hill, Stafford

WORD WATCHING

By Philip Howard

ADAD
- a. A grandfather
- b. *A semicircular chisel*
- c. By Golly!

BOURGADE
- a. *Marinated venison stew*
- b. A village
- c. A breastplate

AGNOMEN
- a. A hen party
- b. A military crocodile
- c. A nickname

BUCEPHALUS
- a. A whelk
- b. A horse
- c. A jellyfish

Answers on page 21

BRIDGE

by Robert Sheehan

A "FORCING PASS" occurs in auctions in which it is not logical for a partnership to pass out the opposition's bid. If a player makes a forcing pass, his partner must not allow the auction to die — he must double the opponents or bid on. Here is a good example, from the £100 game at TGR's bridge club. The proprietor, Howard Cohen, was West, playing with regular winner Colin Simpson (East).

Dealer East East-West game Chicago

♠Q73
♥J97632
♦—
♣10932

♠K6
♥54
♦QJ9763
♣K84

N
W E
S

♠A842
♥—
♦AK108
♣AQJ76

♠J1095
♥AKQ108
♦542
♣5

S	W	N	E
-	-	-	1C
1H	2D	4H	6D
Pass	Pass	6H	Pass
Pass	7D	Pass	Pass
7H	Dble	All Pass	

Contract: Seven Hearts doubled, by South
Lead: king of spades

The first non-routine bid was *North's jump to Four Hearts*, with which he hoped to put pressure on East-West. Over Four Hearts, East might have bid Five Hearts. As that would commit his side to Six Diamonds, it would be a grand slam try showing first-round control of hearts. The direct Six Diamonds was better — North-South were less likely to sacrifice, as they did not know East had plenty to spare.

When that came back to North, he could see that Six hearts would be cheap. He might have thought of that earlier — bidding Five or Six Hearts at his first turn would have made it harder for East-West.

East's pass of Six Hearts was the "forcing pass". His side had voluntarily bid to Six Diamonds, so it was inconceivable that they would allow opponents who could only bid to Four Hearts to play in Six Hearts undoubled. What Pass said was "partner, I think that it is possible we might make Seven Diamonds". In particular, in this sequence it guaranteed first round control of hearts — if East had a heart loser, he would have doubled Six Hearts.

West's bid of Seven Diamonds was well-reasoned. He could see that East must have first-round control of all the suits for his jump to Six Diamonds and subsequent pass of Six Hearts — East could hardly bid like that if his clubs or spades were only queen high. It was possible that East was missing the king of diamonds or the queen of clubs, but to bid a grand slam in this situation you don't need very good odds — all you are doing is swapping a smallish penalty in Six Hearts for the chance of a big plus in Seven Diamonds. On this hand North-South would only concede 400 (ie, 3 off, less 100 for honours) in Six Hearts doubled, so West can afford to try for 2140 in Seven Diamonds if he makes it around a quarter of the time.

Finally, when South bid Seven Hearts West correctly doubled (Pass would invite East to go 7 NT), and found the best lead of the king of spades to take it four off.

COMPUTER GAMES AND PASTIMES

by Tim Wapshott

DREAMWORKS SKG was the new multimillion-pound force in entertainment set-up by director Steven Spielberg, former Disney boss Jeffrey Katzenberg and the music industry mogul David Geffen. As an indication of the embryonic company's pulling power, it was DreamWorks which snapped up the singer George Michael, along with Virgin Records, after his bitter split with Sony. One of the first DreamWorks Interactive computer titles has just been released, and it more than lives up to expectations.

Goosebumps — Escape From Horrorland is a quality adventure adapted from the popular R.L. Stine children's books. The Windows '95 title is a joint production by DreamWorks and Microsoft, ensuring loading is quick and easy and running problems are few. From the start you can tell Mr Spielberg has had a hand in the operation: unlike most video introduction sequences to games, this boasts scenes perfectly acted with neat camera work and even a full-orchestra score. With such high production values, you never feel you are being short-changed.

In the adventure you must find Lizzy, Luke and Clay, who are trapped in spooky Horrorland, by clicking your way through different scenes and buildings. Dracula and a werewolf are among those after your blood, and are best avoided at all times. Searching for hot-spots in every scene reveals tokens to collect, with which to operate a riddle machine, as well as weapons, food and even insects.

Goosebumps surpasses other multimedia adventures by skilfully mixing gaming styles. So one minute you may be clicking your way around a street and the next, by hitting on a tunnel entrance, you are whisked to an underground level and a first-person, Doom-style game collecting further tokens while avoiding a monster.

The quality of the colour video sequences may be fairly low, the results mostly grainy and never in sync, but their speed and the actors' no-nonsense delivery carry the scary storyline along with rare energy and conviction. For children aged eight and over.

Goosebumps from DreamWorks and Microsoft has energy and conviction

While Microsoft is credited with a helping hand in the development of Goosebumps, it doesn't fare so well with one of its own titles, **Monster Truck Madness.** This listless racing game lets you drive large trucks with even larger tyres but the vehicles and the racing lack throttle. Two other tiresome new titles are Eagle Peak's **Takeru** and Emme Interactive's **The Sacred Mirror of Kofun.** Takeru is a dire oriental caper on two CD-Roms, which involves much dreary clicking around but no adventure. The occasional pay-offs of cheap cartoon clips, hastily over-dubbed in English, merely confuse. The Sacred Mirror of Kofun is a stagnant underwater saga which comes on three CD-Roms, but discs two and three might never get an airing.

To close, a look at two of the entries from **Cyberspace Thirty-One.** Simon Tondeur of Battersea, south London, praised Eidos Interactive's Tomb Raider, a game for the Sony PlayStation, and blamed it for poor exam results. "*Tomb Raider* is a platform game with a bonus, it is 3D," he wrote. "Although hard to master at first (the controls are quite complicated), once you've got the hang of it you'll be hooked. The main character, Lara, has a host of moves available to her, including the skill of shimmying. Despite a curvy, pneumatic figure, her athletic abilities are stunning and it's refreshing that for once the goody is female and British.

"Immensely intricate with superb gameplay, even my mother couldn't tear herself away. My only complaint is that it is too good. I bought Tomb Raider just before my GCSEs and gobbled it up, consequently ruining my results."

Paul Drew of Braintree, Essex, opted for Sierra's Shivers on PC CD-Rom for Windows '95. "Last night I was locked in a strange museum with a bunch of evil spirits," he explained. "As you explore the various themed rooms within the museum you must capture the spirits hiding in the exhibits, but don't venture too close or the spirits will absorb some of your life essence. You must solve puzzles to gain access to other areas of the museum and the graphics and music in each room create an absorbing atmosphere. It is so absorbing, in fact, that my first spirit encounter caused me to jump out of my chair."

But there are drawbacks to Shivers: "The only criticism is the disappointing end scene. But the gameplay, puzzles and atmosphere make up for that. Shivers is another game, like Myst, that you'll play again and again."

This week's Top Tip is from Andrea Bowman, ten, of Ramsgate: "Improve your clicking skills by Super Gluing your right index finger to the left mouse button."

THE LISTENER CROSSWORD

No 3406: Morrissey by 149

EACH OF THE *nine numbered morris displays contains* three eight-letter words (reading in order clockwise or anti-clockwise beginning anywhere) and eight three-letter words reading towards the centre, entered on the *spots* that occur at line junctions. The eight-letter words are clued in their groups in alphabetical order (two being proper names). The three-letter words (apart from those *in all the diagonals*, which are to be deduced) are clued in lines which include their definitions and a total anagram of their entered letters. In these clues three contain the definitions *in their correct order*.

Eight-letter words

1 The soul I kiss might be imbued with a touch of longevity, *but if I fix my eyes on you, you're dead.*
Exotic creatures mad about the Listener, see?
In angry scratch you'll have what's to bother you

2 A heavy plane, one ready for flying
Nut, quite mature, *exchanging cases*
Pilosity endlessly failing — see balding?

3 One form of (si)licate
Parking old coach he'll talk incessantly
Solver (ie *in difficulties*) *works with outstanding features*

4 Boggy spot in Scots *isle on long magnetic contour line*
Acid salt almost solely found in a species of holly
Serpent you'll find wriggling around Spain, US claim

5 Common white? A pure one's rare!
Extremely small pigeonlike bird, an early *navigational* aid?
A Greek woodland deity or a Norse god among southern spiritual leaders, say.

6 Where (in Maine) you have time to enter into water skiing races, say?
Frailty in a way not right? See me about in this?
Shoes etc — you need to take two of each properly

7 *You'd best heed it needs changing!*
Note: ——'s seen as Antonio's great buddy
I display prism's colours I get in swell

8 One who rests over gun, I hear
Old injury — it's continually troublesome
He used to live around the Elbe or another river's mouth parts (northern)

9 Pollard, perhaps, more peculiar when seen among dead one lopped
Dress too plain? It's not compulsory
Board shields parrot that's stealworthy

Three-letter words

-1-2-3- *Watchful chap in pub* having mixed drink of it and not being poorly in it, rank, r-rolls in drunk

-4-5-6- Any bravo whale prince eggs old women in uniform to make smitten sailor steer so? Aye

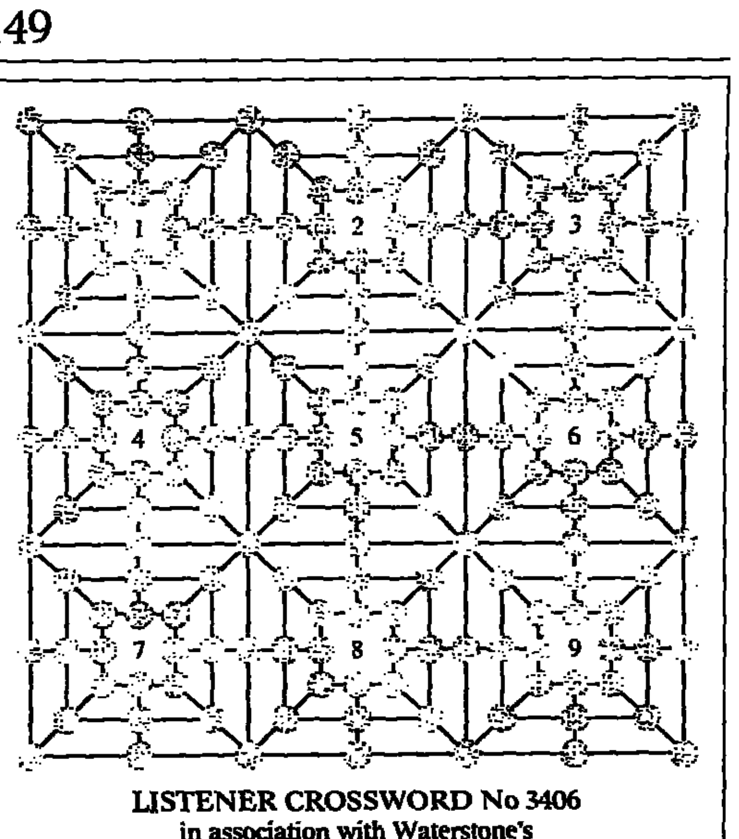
-7-8-9- Damp animal worker trumpet god of native *African changes into real* Bantu sort, sir

-1-4-7- *Measure* palm devil with a single *mineral* digit on working araeometer? Open it

-2-5-8- To associate lyric with clear poetic bird — letter to Jock's inner room makes base people pained

-3-6-9- Allow young hooligan in Scotland to sin — cheekily *examine hamper for letter — render pretty deal* awkward

Statistics relating to 1996 crosswords, including personal record, are now available to senders of an SAE (from overseas stamp exempt), at least 220mmx110mm, to J.E.Green, 63 Green Lane, St Albans, Herts AL3 6HE. It would be helpful if applications could be kept separate from current puzzle submissions.

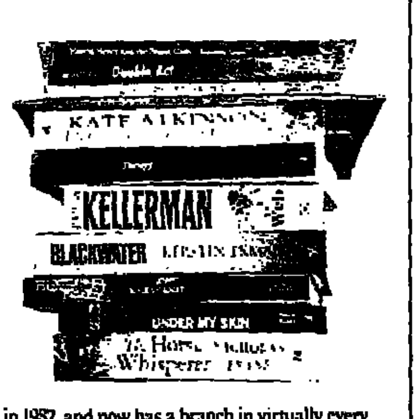


LISTENER CROSSWORD No 3406
in association with Waterstone's

NAME ....
ADDRESS ....
....
....

Cut out and send the completed crossword and coupon above to The Listener Crossword No 3406, 63 Green Lane, St Albans, Hertfordshire AL3 6HE, by Thursday, May 1.

WATERSTONE'S



The winner will receive a Waterstone's book token worth £75. Five *runners-up* will each receive a book token worth £10

Waterstone's first opened a bookshop in 1982, and now has a branch in virtually every major town and city in the UK and Ireland. Each of its 100-odd branches has at least 50,000 titles in stock and can order any book currently in print in the UK. Out-of-Print Booksearch, 01892 522700. Mailing Service and Signed First Editions, 01225 448596. For your nearest branch of Waterstone's, call 0181-742 3800.

Solution to No 3403: All at Sea by Franc

I	S	P	L	E	N	T	Y	O	F	T	I	M
E	L	O	I	N	A	H	A	R	G	O	T	E
R	O	A	S	T	S	E	R	A	C	R	A	T
E	P	A	L	E	T	S	G	L	O	S	S	O
H	F	A	E	R	I	E	S	H	A	S	L	W
T	R	I	S	T	E	S	T	I	C	H	O	I
P	A	N	I	A	R	■	D	S	T	O	O	N
S	I	G	N	I	N	G	A	T	T	E	S	T
E	M	O	P	N	R	E	M	O	R	S	E	H
H	S	T	U	M	P	T	A	R	I	F	F	I
T	E	S	T	E	L	O	G	I	B	E	R	S
H	T	I	N	N	Y	U	E	A	E	R	O	G
S	A	R	H	T	O	T	D	N	A	E	M	A

ARMADA

ARMADA

Quotation: There is plenty of time to win this game and to thrash the Spaniards too.

The winner is: S. Subbuswamy of Billericay, Essex.

The five runners-up are: F. Bowsher of Lichfield, Staffordshire; G. Duff of Warminster, Wilts; W. Hart of Brentwood, Essex; J. Williams of Canterbury, Kent; K. Self of Ashington, Northumberland.

CORRECTION:
In the Listener Crossword No 3405 (Weekend, April 12) the missing clue, 18 across, was: Both sides surround Aries sunless encampment (4)

*Survey undertaken by NOP Market Research among 1,000 randomly selected bank customers. Interviews were conducted by telephone between 20 Nov 1996 and 12 Dec 1996. Enquirers must be aged 18 or over. In order to safeguard our customers, certain transactions may require written confirmation. First Direct reserves the right to decline to open an account for you. First Direct credit facilities are subject to status. For written details of our services write to First Direct, Freepost, Leeds LS98 2RF. First Direct is a division of Midland Bank plc. Calls may be monitored and/or recorded. **LLOYDS** Cheque Account details are based on the Classic Account. The costs comprise fees of £8 per month. **BARCLAYS** Cheque Account details are based on the Barclays Bank Account. *The costs comprise fees of £5 per month.* **NAT WEST** Cheque Account details are based on the Current Plus Account. The costs comprise fees of £5 per month. All fees may vary in the future. **First Direct** variable interest rate for overdrafts up to £250 is 12.6% EAR. All information based on authorised overdrafts of 5 days or more per month and correct at 11 March 1997.

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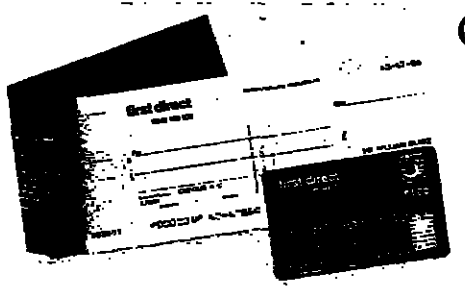

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هكذا مشاكل

Japan needs Britain to build its top-down sportster

Page 3

CAR 97

Billy takes to three wheels but not for a joke

Page 5

SATURDAY APRIL 19 1997

Triumph booms back to the top

Britain's late lamented bike industry is again beating *the world, says*

Ronald Faux

John Bloor, jobbing plasterer, used a motorcycle as working transport with a sidecar to ferry his buckets, ladders, and trowels between jobs. When he moved from plastering walls to developing property on a major scale, an affection for motorcycles and respect for them as practical transport survived his transition to millionaire status.

When Bloor chose to commit a slice of his fortune to reviving a moribund British motorcycle industry and restoring the Triumph marque, the decision seemed bold if not impertinent.

It took him 13 years and an estimated £80 million, but Bloor's faith in Triumph has been rewarded. For the first time in years, a Triumph tops the sales charts. Figures from the Motor Cycle Industry Association show the Daytona T595 beating Honda, Suzuki, Yamaha, BMW and Kawasaki in the category for machines over 900cc.

Triumph sold 525 of the £9,999 bikes in the first quarter of the year, satisfying part of a waiting list for the bike that stunned the industry: Triumph notched up 1,400 orders before its launch. Triumph sold 15,000 bikes last year, with 80 per cent for export, mainly to the United States and Germany.

Yet when Bloor bought the Triumph name, it had all the charisma of a rusting moped. The giants of quality mass-production in Japan — Honda, Kawasaki, Yamaha, and Suzuki — had consigned the most respected names of British motorcycling to history. Lacking vision, investment, and leadership, the industry had vanished as a major player.

Pure nostalgia was never likely to figure in Bloor's decision to buy the intellectual rights to the company, which was by 1983 a failed workers' co-operative producing an aged range of machines. The name Triumph had a powerful resonance, but his investment was based on cold-eyed pragmatism, an assessment of the potential market and how Triumph could serve it at the right price.

More than four years of research, planning, and cautious development by Bloor's team at Hinckley, Leicestershire, have yielded success. A new Triumph leaves the production line every six minutes and 32 seconds of the working day. On annual sales worth about £100 million, Triumph is now returning a profit, although the level is lower than Bloor could expect from less audacious investment.

John Bloor is a very private man, rarely, if ever, giving interviews and preferring that the quality and popularity of his motorcycles and the successful growth of Triumph speak for him. His cover was blown though when he was named the 116th richest man in Britain, worth an estimated £175 million through his Bloor Holdings.

A cushion of such wealth helps but the investment was a mighty gamble. Now though, a second factory is under construction in Hinckley and the plan is that between them, two assembly lines could ultimately turn out 50,000 Triumphs a year, hardly a threat to Japanese volume but a valuable corner of the market.

A number of trends have helped, some of them predictable, others more fortuitous. Crowded roads, rush-hour gridlock, the nightmare of city centre parking, along with rising fuel, road tax and insurance costs all conspire to make two-wheeled travel increasingly attractive. Stylish looks, the great reliability of the new generation of motorcycles and a perception that motorcycling has become safer, backed by statistics and mandatory training, add to motorcycling's new appeal.

The cult of the born-again bikers, with cash to spend and rose-tinted memories of their youth, has also been significant. Clothing is smart, engines start at the press of a button and no longer spew oil; £10,000 buys you the performance of a Porsche and two wheels can be a lifestyle statement. Add to these a touch of jingoistic pride and the formula starts to add up to success.

More than 80 per cent of the 2,500 components used on the Triumph production line come from the UK and nearly half are manufactured or finished within the Hinckley factory. This is as British as you get these days, the company says, but searching for quality means using Italian wheels, Japanese electronics and a French fuel-injection system.

Bloor's design and engineering team listens hard, digests what the market requires and responds accordingly. Hence a line of solid, dependable machines culminating in the 128bhp Daytona.

Bloor has generated a palpable sense of family among his 450 workers and the boss is apt to appear, sleeves rolled up, alongside his managers.

The word is that Bloor intends to keep Triumph as a relatively small but flexible company, able to react quickly to market demand. Rising production has allowed the company to branch out from the uncompromising modular formula of in-line three or four-cylinder engines with many identical parts shared between models, to more specialist concepts, which the T595 signalled.

Accessories, too, are becoming more than a nice little earner, although still far short of Harley Davidson's success in allegedly profiting more from Harley memorabilia than from bikes.

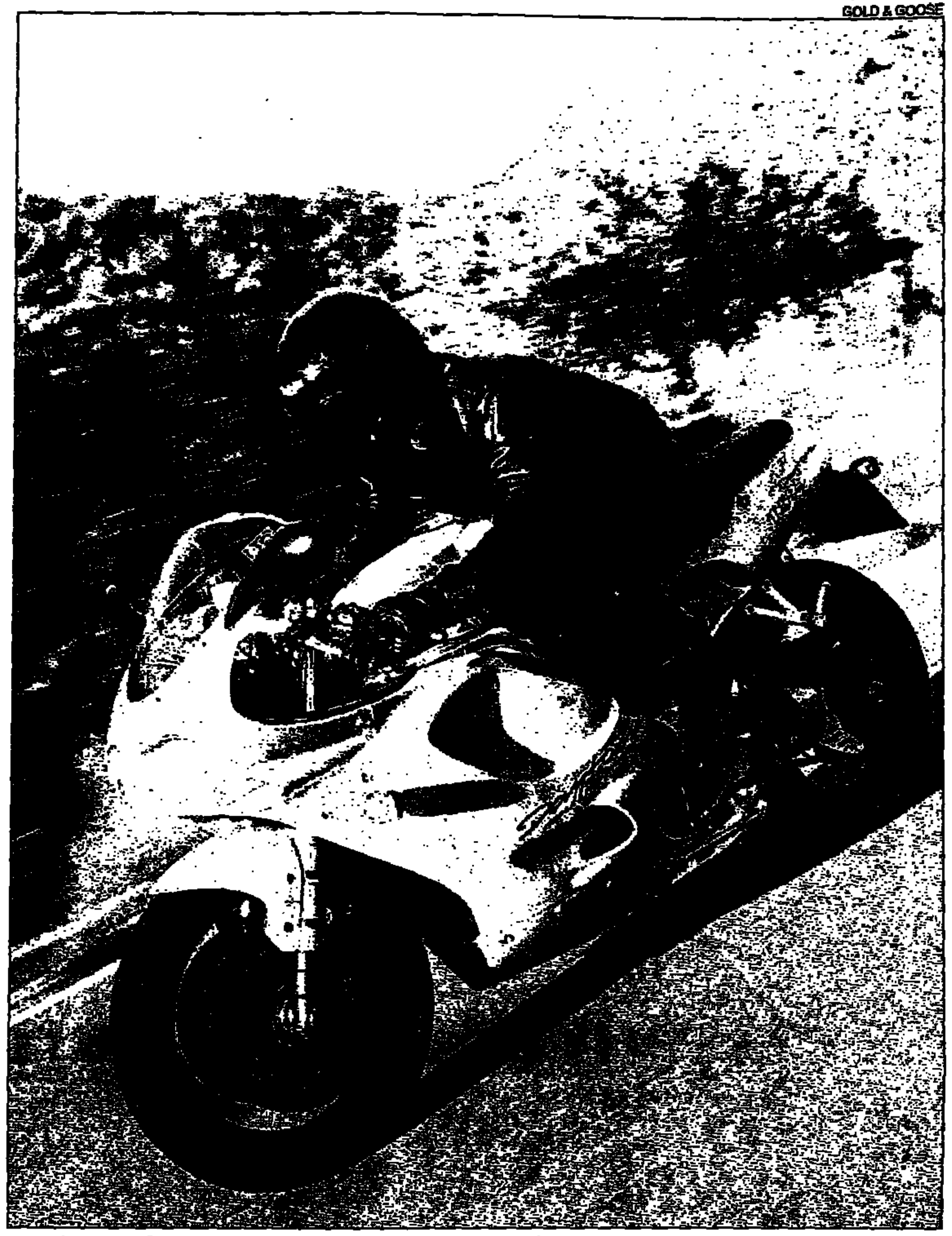
Triumph now has the machines to service demand, from the leather-suited macho racers to the born-again bikers who want simply to burble down memory lane. Their publicity material is slick, stylish, and highly professional, presenting motorcycles as elegant and fun.

Perhaps, though, Bloor may feel a tinge of regret that there is nothing in there for a jobbing plasterer wanting transport for himself, his buckets, ladders, and trowels.

> The queue for the factory's new T595 Daytona stunned motorbike makers

ADVERTISING ARCHIVES

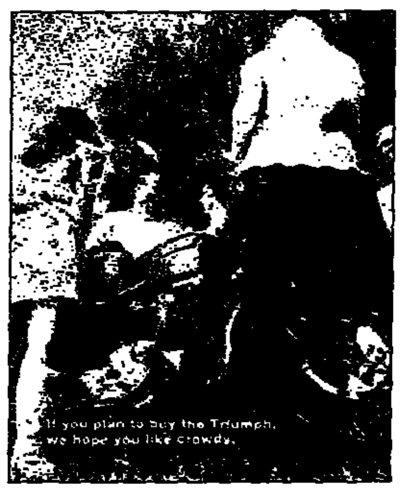
GOLD & GOOSE



John Bloor's team ditched the nostalgia for old days and old ways that dogged the 1970s industry. Now, quality manufacture and rigorous marketing have put the new Daytona on top of the bestseller list

TRIUMPH HISTORY: 20 REMARKABLE FACTS ABOUT THE MARQUE

- ● TRIUMPH was founded by German immigrants, Siegfried Bettman and Maurice Shulte. Bicycle makers since the 1880s, they fitted a Belgian Minerva engine to a bicycle frame in 1902. Within three years, the company had its own tiny three horsepower engine.
- ● DURING the First World War, the British Army bought 30,000 Model H 550cc machines.
- ● BY THE 1920s, Triumph was turning out 1,000 Model P 500cc machines a week: price £43.
- ● JACK SANGSTER, owner of Ariel, another of Britain's famous motorcycling names, bought Triumph in 1936 to save it from financial disaster.
- ● POSTWAR Triumph was a major dollar earner; the Thunderbird, Tiger and others all much desired.
- ● THE 650cc Thunderbird, introduced in 1949, was a hit with metallic blue paintwork and distinctive badging.
- ● By 1951, it was all change again, Triumph sold to the powerful arms-to-bikes group, BSA.
- ● A STREAMLINED Triumph, ridden by Johnny Allen, hit 214mph on the Bonneville salt flats in the USA in 1956 — but authorities refused to ratify the record. Triumph didn't care, for the publicity turned out . . . a triumph.
- ● THE BONNEVILLE, named after the record attempt, became Triumph's most famous bike, launched in 1959 as a 650cc parallel twin-cylinder machine. By 1972, more than 250,000 Bonnevilles were built.
- ● MALCOLM UPHILL set the first 100mph Isle of Man lap for a production bike in 1969 on a Bonneville.
- ● MOODY Marlon Brando turned the USA on to the legend of Triumph by riding one in the cult 1954 film, *The Wild One*. He was the hoodlum biker terrorising a small Western town. The movie was banned all over America.
- ● LESS MOODY, but magnificent in her own little way, Baywatch babe Pamela Anderson rode a Thunderbird in her movie debut, *Barb Wire*.
- ● ODDLY, Triumph, the car, was nothing to do with the motorcycles. The bikemaker turned carmaker in 1923 but folded in 1939. The car business was bought by Standard which resurrected the line in 1945. The ill-fated TR7 was the last Triumph sports car.
- ● IN THE 1960s, Triumph was making 250,000 machines a year.
- ● ULTIMATE 1960s café racer was the Triton — custom-built with a Norton frame and Triumph engine
- ● FIRST REAL "superbike" was the 1970s Triumph Trident, beating Honda's CB750 to the honour: three-cylinders, 750cc . . . and fast.
- ● IN 1973, BSA went bankrupt and Triumph became part of the great nationalisation experiment when the Labour government bailed the business out and set up the Meriden co-operative.
- ● MERIDEN collapsed in 1983 and John Bloor bought the Triumph rights from the receiver — but a new Triumph didn't appear for nearly eight years.
- ● TRIUMPH is a rare survivor of nearly 80 British motorcycle makers, all based in and around Coventry.
- ● BLOOR, SON OF a Staffordshire miner, missed years of schooling through ill health — but is still one of Britain's richest men.


If you plan to buy the Triumph, we hope you like crowds.

1960s advert: anyone got a spanner?

SOMEONE TO WATCH OVER YOU

[illegible] just, in an accident, broken down or even [illegible] rage attack SKYNET 2000 is there for you. [illegible] integrated cellular touch screen display, you [illegible] phone for assistance and reassurance at a moment's notice. Not to mention all the information and advice you need. That's because every minute of every day our highly skilled operators are there to take your call. And SKYNET 2000 offers much more than that. Should your car be broken into, stolen (an immobiliser makes this highly unlikely) or towed away, within seconds we can track the vehicle and take the appropriate preventative action. Sound interesting? Wait till you hear the full story. Call 0800 SKYNET or 0171 667 2000 now for more information and your Authorised Dealer. What have you got to lose?

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Remember the old days when cars were blessed with character and individuality? Well, you're wrong: they all looked cloned, just as they do today

Sad old myth of young sexy bodies

DRIVEN TO DISTRACTION

Peter Barnard

I took my wife and youngest daughter for a fish and chip supper at Harry Ramsden's the other night. I mention this not only to give you the opportunity to say that, my God, these journalists certainly know how to live, but also because of a photograph on the wall of the restaurant.

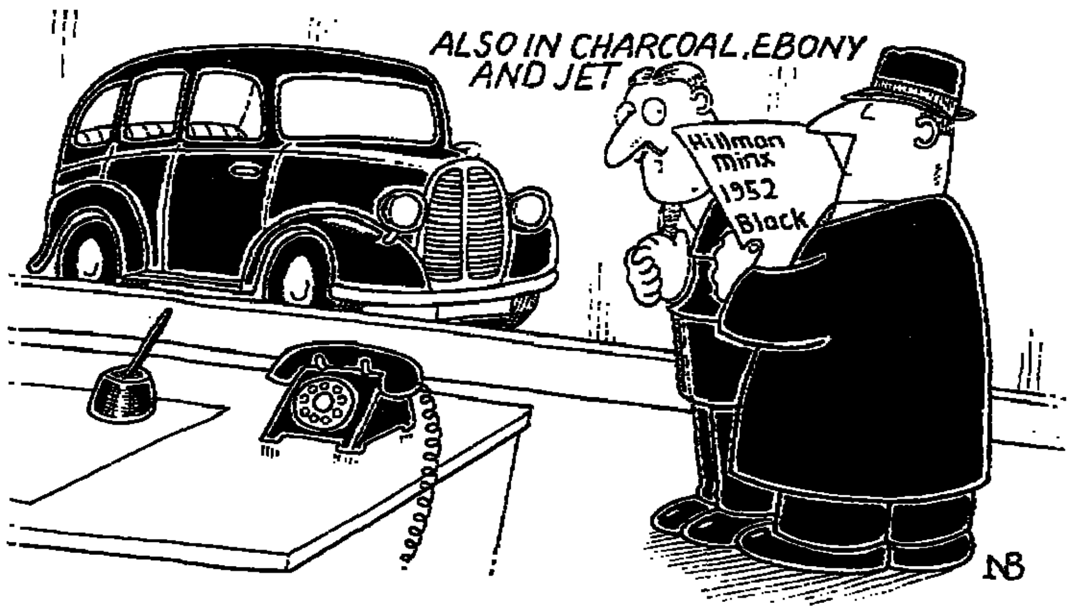
In the pantheon of subjects likely to make an arresting snap, a car park is not highly placed. But this black and white picture was taken back in 1952 and showed the car park at the first Harry Ramsden's.

Around lunchtime on the day that I saw this picture, a friend of mine had raised one of the commoner themes of modern car commentary, which is that all cars look alike. This is a modern mantra, like saying that all bread tastes like cotton wool.

I have for a long time gone along with the view that most cars look alike, but standing in front of the 1952 picture of Harry Ramsden's car park I was struck by a remarkable fact: all the cars looked alike. There were rows of bog-standard Ford Prefects and Morris 8s and apart from a few bumper and radiator details, anyone but a *complete* anorak would have been pressed to tell them apart.

Of course there are some fascinating contrasts about the photograph, like the fact that all the cars in it are British (or built in Britain, to pacify readers who often write to remind me that Ford is an American company). And, notwithstanding the monochrome nature of the photograph, it was clear that most of the cars were black or dark blue.

But all the small cars came from more or less the same mould and all the large cars did, too. So there must be some other reason why we bemoan the uniformity of modern car shapes and it is probably to do not so much with nostalgia but with the fact that most of the people doing the bemoaning are of a certain age.


ALSO IN CHARCOAL, EBONY AND JET
Hillman Minx 1952 Black
NB

When I was a boy I would ride in the back of my parents' car and test their patience by calling out the make and model of cars coming towards us. In those days there was nothing like the variety of cars that we see now but I doubt that small boys have changed much: their principal roles are to spot cars and walk mud into the house.

Trends in aerodynamics tend to dictate the basics of a car's shape but far from all cars looking alike compared with 40 years ago it is quite possible to argue that there is more variety in modern car shapes than ever was the case back then.

In the "good old days" Wolseley and Riley cars usually came from the same chassis and the same bodyshell. Ditto Austin and Morris and Sunbeam and Hillman. Yet the flexibility of modern technology means that cars of markedly different outward appearance come from similar chassis and floorpans: Vauxhall's Tigra and Corsa are two examples and the Ford Ka is built from a shortened Fiesta chassis.

Our perception that cars look the same arises not only from age but from two other factors: the number of cars on the road and our particular view of them. The most popular models are built in huge numbers and they compete for the same market, therefore the superficial fundamentals of, say, the Mondeo and the Vectra are bound to be similar.

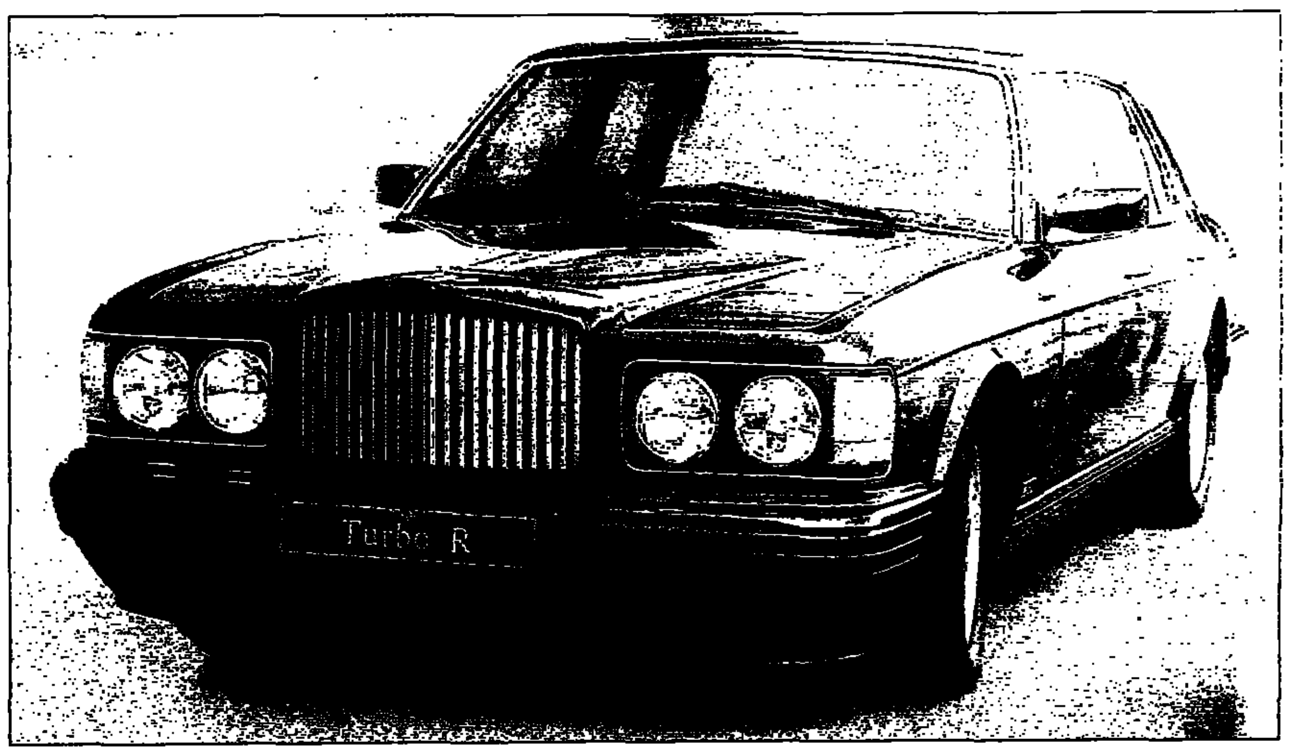
And our view of most cars is from the back. Sit in the rush-hour jam on the Chiswick flyover any day of the week and the overwhelming impression is of a static army of wedge-shaped vehicles, designed that way to get the most aerodynamic result and to maximise luggage space by giving the rear end greater height to save on length.

Not convinced? Join the club. The sneaking suspicion remains that, even if cars were never as we like to remember them, some manufacturers have gone too far down the route towards homogenised vehicles.

I never see a new Range Rover without wondering why the hell a classic and distinguished shape had to be abandoned for something that looks like your average Japanese off-roader. But an exception does not a rule make.

Prince's bulletproof guarantee

After a Royal row, Prince Charles is to get a luxury tank, says **Kevin Eason**



Bentley's 6.7-litre engine can propel the two-tonne body to 160mph, even with the weight of its security features

The choice was made in heaven for the average motorist: a Jaguar, BMW 7-series or a Bentley Turbo. Intriguingly, the issue of back pain topped the agenda when the Prince of Wales ordered his new official cars. And the usual criteria of price, performance and safety — which clinch the deal for most of us — are considered in a different light when the future king picks a car.

For them, safety does not just mean how well their car fares in crash tests, but how well it could withstand an IRA bomb or attack from a sniper. Performance means how well it could outstrip a potential hijacker's car, while price... well, that is almost meaningless to the companies asked to bid for the honour of providing Royal transport.

The Prince is to get two new official cars — though only after a row with the Metropolitan Police over what they should be.

The Met is to provide a specially built, armour-plated Jaguar XJ saloon to transport the Prince around London. But he has also chosen a new *Bentley Turbo R for longer* trips, with £100,000 worth of security improvements which will be added at Rolls-Royce's factory at Crewe in Cheshire.

Even though the Met favours the Jaguar's high performance and handling capabilities, Prince Charles was not keen on what he views as a cramped interior. After several polo-playing accidents, the Prince is acutely aware of the problems of back pain when travelling long distances and insisted that the Jaguar's cabin was too small for trips outside London.

He then inquired at BMW, which makes its gorgeous 7-series, boasting more room for rear-seat passengers than the Jag. BMW was anxious to boost prestige by providing a car, but officials were horrified that the Prince would be seen *in a non-British model.*

Rolls-Royce solved the problem by agreeing to add special safety features to the Bentley Turbo, already one of the Prince's favourite cars. Although the safety features are officially secret, they will include bulletproof glass, a steel bomb-proof shield under the car and on the roof, and a satellite tracking system so that police can follow the car's position at all times. There will also be an elaborate communications system on board.

The advantage of the Bentley is its incredible 6.7-litre engine which can propel the two-tonne body to 160mph even with the extra weight of the security features. Both the *Jag and the BMW would need* suspension strengthening and engine tweaks, to handle the weight of the equipment. The Prince is expected to use the Bentley most, particularly at a time when he is thought a target for IRA terrorists.

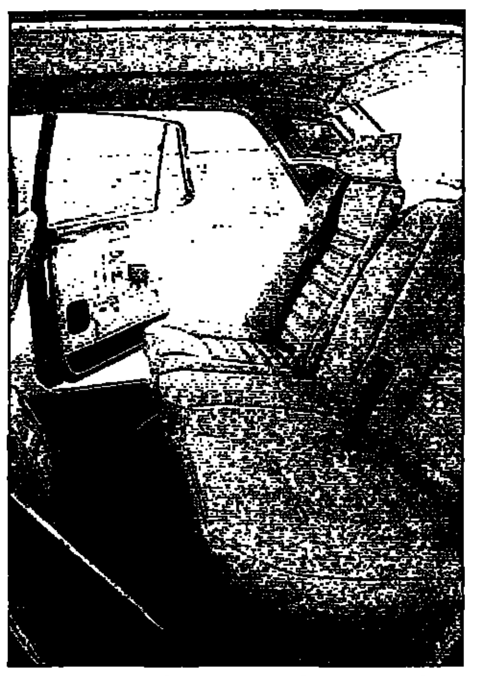
Yet the concern over Royal safety is in stark contrast to the cars used daily by the Royal family. The Prince's favourite marque remains Aston Martin while Diana, Princess of Wales, has been seen in everything from a Ford Escort to an Audi convertible with no more extra equipment than a decent stereo and a baby seat.

LIMO CHOICE

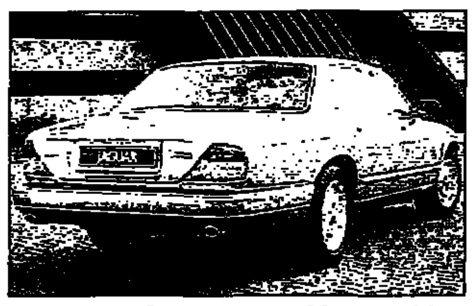
Bentley Turbo R: Throne-size seats and headroom for a basketball player. Charges to 143mph but Prince Charles should charge the petrol bills to the Metropolitan Police. Price: £143,267 before armour plating.

Jaguar XJ12 6.0: Long wheelbase makes for comfortable long legs but that roof is a bit low. Wonderful super-cruiser — and it's a *snip* at £56,200, pre-plated.

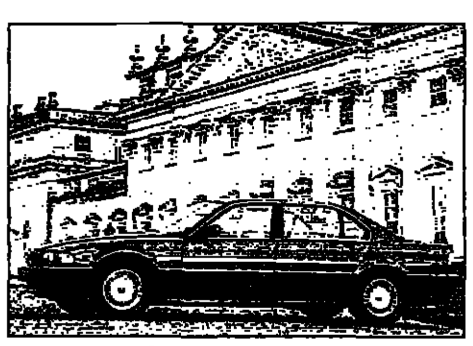
BMW 750 5.4 V12: Lots of room in long wheelbase form and a magical engine. The car's almost British anyway, with BMW owning Rover. Price: £73,450, pre-plated



Roomy: royalty can stretch to a Bentley



The Prince fears a Jag could cramp him



BMW: spacious, but considered foreign

AA GRIDLOCK GUIDE

● **LONDON**
A4 The Strand closed westbound for resurfacing between Lancaster Place and Trafalgar Square.
A406 Upper Edmonton; major roadworks on Angel Road (North Circular).
A11 Leytonstone; major roadworks at the Green Man Roundabout (A12, A114).
A306 Hammersmith Bridge *closed both* ways.
A2400 Bloomsbury; work in Upper Woburn Place and the east side of Tavistock Square.
A5 Kilburn High Road reduced to one lane both ways.
A3 Kingston Bypass; Northbound lane closure between Shannon Corner (A298) and Coombe lane Junction (A238).
A307 Kingston-upon-Thames; off-peak single alternate traffic on Richmond Road.
A205 Wandsworth; roadworks on Upper Richmond road.

● **SOUTH EAST**
A413 Wendover Bypass; work and restrictions on local roads.
M40 junctions 1a-3; contraflow.
A130 Sandon: roadworks with width restrictions.
M27 junctions 8-10; contraflow.
A41 Watford; lane closed eastbound.
M20 junction 4; roadworks, and lane closures on slip road.
M25 junctions 8-10; lane closures both ways.

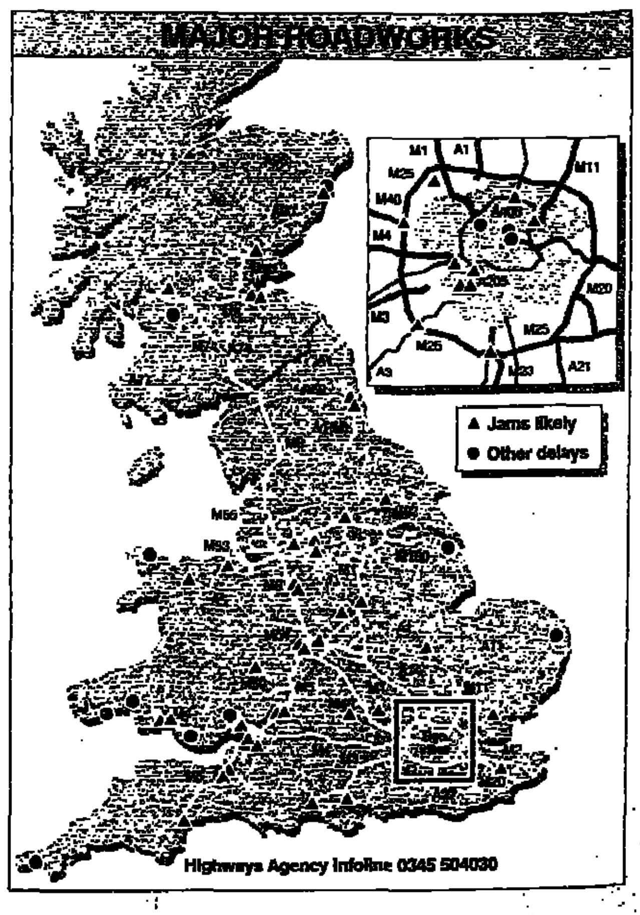
● **SOUTH WEST**
M5 junctions 18-19; contraflow with 50mph limit.
A370 Bedminster; major roadworks on Coronation Road.
A30 near Penzance; temporary lights.
A376; resurfacing.
A31 near Ferndown; roadworks with lane closures.
M5 junction 13; only one lane at roundabout junction with the A419.
A40 Cheltenham; temporary lights.
A38 Bridgwater; roadworks.
A38 North Petherton; roadworks.

● **MIDLANDS AND EAST ANGLIA**
A1 Alconbury reduced to one lane northbound.
A38 Burnaston; major roadworks at junction with A564.
A49 near Hereford; temporary lights.
A6 Lockington; temporary lights between M1 junction 24 and Sawley island.
A1064 Acle Way Bridge; roadworks.
A500 Stoke-on-Trent; contraflow with only one lane open each way.
A50 Stoke-on-Trent; major construction.
A41 Wolverhampton; temporary lights.
M6 junction 6; slip road from Salford Circus to the M6 North is closed.

● **NORTH**
A627 Bardsley; roadworks on Ashton Road at the junction with Keb Lane. Expect delays.
A572 Swinton; Worsley Road closed.
A16 Grimsby; Scartho Road reduced to one lane both ways between Sutcliffe Avenue and the hospital traffic lights.
A1058, Heaton, Newcastle; only one lane each way at Cornerhouse Junction, and roadworks on Coast Road at A19 Silverlink Junction.
M1 junction 47; lane closures and speed restrictions. Expect delays on the M1, M621, and Dewsbury Road.
M1 junction 42; narrow lanes both ways. 50mph speed limit.

● **WALES**
A4061 Bridgend; temporary lights on Litchard Hill.
A48 Carmarthen; temporary lights and lane restrictions.
A5 near Betws-y-Coed; temporary lights.
A548 between Oakenholt and Kelsterton; 30mph limit.
A5025 City Dulas; roadworks with one-way system over a temporary bridge. Also, width and weight limits.
A449; southbound closure between A472 and M4 junction 24
A4139 between Manorbier and Tenby; temporary lights.
A483 Fabian Way; lane closures both ways on the main dual carriageway into Swansea from the M4.
A4067 Mumbles Road; major roadworks between Sketty Lane and the rugby ground.
A472 Pontypool; contraflow between Pontymoile and the Heron Roundabout. Lengthy delays expected.

● **SCOTLAND**
A8 Glasgow Road; off-peak lane closures both ways between the Drumbrae and Maybury Roundabouts.
M8 junction 2; major roadworks, with lane closures on the roundabout at junction 2 (Newbridge Spur, M9). Regular delays on all approaches (M8, M9, A8, and A 89).
A737 near Beith; temporary traffic lights between the Roadhead roundabout and Beith.
A90 between Dundee and Perth reduced to one lane both ways between Inchyra and Kinfauns. Expect delays.
M8 *junction 30 reduced* to one lane both ways at Junction 30 (Erskine Spur, M898).



Regal cover-up on Reliant affair

John Naish follows the trail of a princess's low-born former loves

The Princess Royal and one of her Scimitars in the 1970s

Could you be driving around in a royal Reliant oblivious to its blue-blooded connections? At least one person is — thanks to Buckingham Palace's anxiety to cover up a long-running love affair.

The affair, between the high-born Princess Royal and *the apparently lowly Reliant*, is hardly a candidate for inclusion in the list of royal scandals, but nevertheless the Palace has scrupulously tried to cover it up.

What the Palace appears keen to avoid is being involved in the burgeoning *Hello!*-style market that has owners adding hundreds or thousands of pounds on to the value of vehicles that can claim some kind of celebrity link.

A brief scan of recent newsstand car magazines reveals *sellers offering such gems as* King Hussein's Bristol 404 coupé, a Lamborghini Espada driven by Princess Grace of Monaco, and the bullet-proof limousine used by US presidents Roosevelt, Truman and Eisenhower.

Martin Chisholm, head of vintage and veteran cars at Sotheby's, says the attraction of regal second-hands goes further than the lure of owning a piece of blue-blooded heritage: it also means that the mechanics have been extremely *well maintained*: "Servicing on such vehicles is done in abundance — after all, you could not have a situation where the royal car broke down on the side of the road."

But the Palace, in an *attempt to protect monarchical mystique*, has been keen to disguise the royal heritage of all the six or so Reliant Scimitars the Princess Royal has owned since the 1970s.

Not that loyal Scimitar ownership is anything to be ashamed of — the sports cars are a world apart from Reliant's better-known three-wheelers. The story goes that the Princess's Scimitar love affair began when the Duke of Edinburgh taught her to drive *in an early prototype. But* asking the Scimitar Owners' Club about the Princess's former cars prompts a reverential, "Er, that's all a bit hush-hush, you know."

More forthcoming was David Jones, of Graham Walker Ltd in Chester, which now owns the Scimitar manufacturing rights. He says that the Palace and Reliant agreed that the Princess's old cars were not to be sold as ex-Royal vehicles after they were returned to the factory. Certainly he says, Reliant removed the Home Office radios, returned their leather interiors to standard, and tried to give them a new identity.

But it didn't always happen. "We had the last Reliant-built car that she owned, which she used from July 1986," Jones says. "It came to us complete with her 1420H personal number plate and a hole in the bonnet where her horse mascot had been.

"However, when the person who bought it from us telephoned Buckingham Palace to *ask about its date of manufacture* for registration purposes, they flatly denied that the car had ever had anything to do with the Princess Royal."

At least one of the Princess's old Scimitars has successfully sunk into anonymity. Conversely, one Scimitar has been advertised for sale as royally owned when Jones says it never had been.

Jones is puzzled by the Palace's Scimitar secrecy *— and dismissive of the* celebrity-car cult. "While the royal link might help people a little bit in selling a Scimitar, I don't think it's that important. The man who bought ours would have done so anyway."

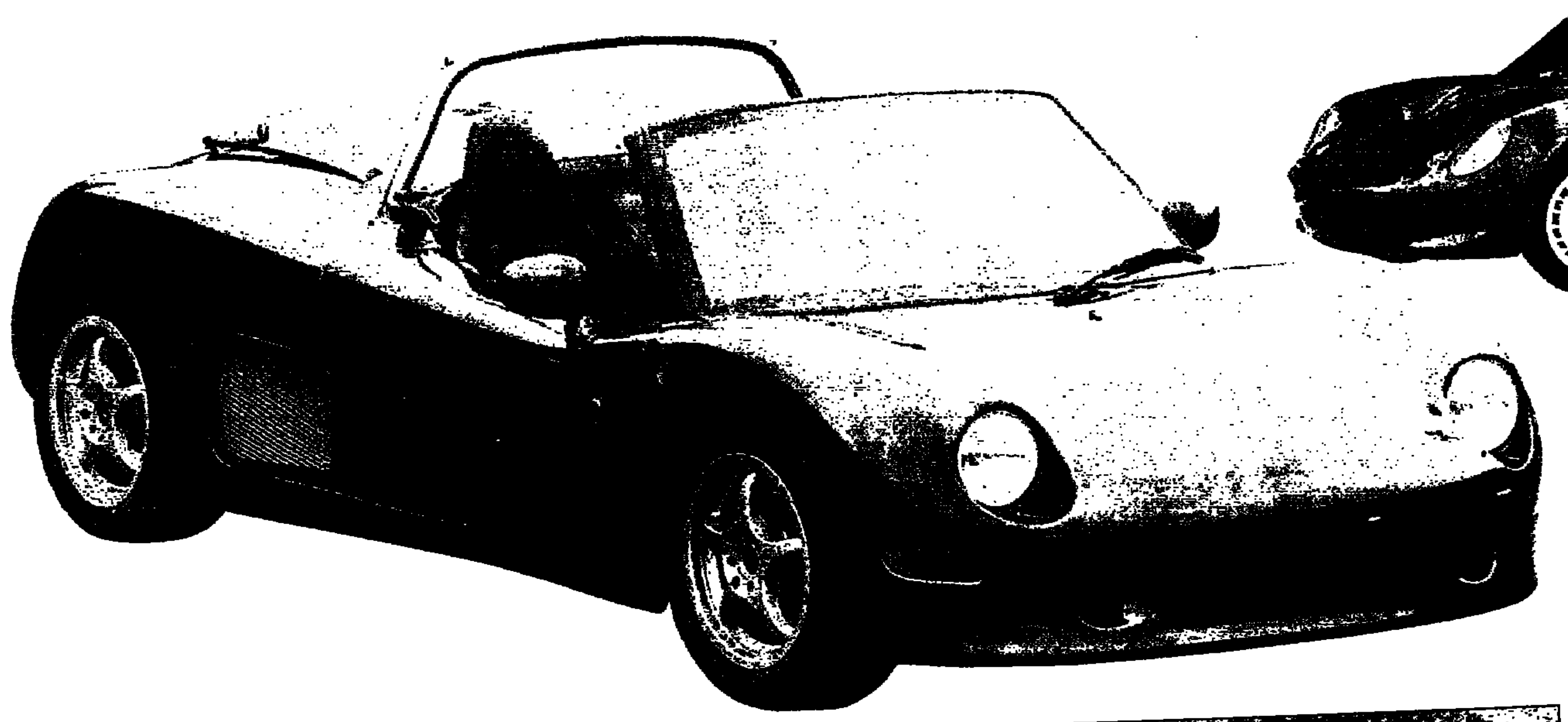
John Cadman of Tring, might well agree — for he has had a tough job exploiting his Rover's regal connections. The chauffeur's logbook that came with the 1968 P5B coupé shows it was used as a limousine in *the Scilly Isles to drive the* Queen Mother on her tour of the islands, as well as carrying Prince Charles.

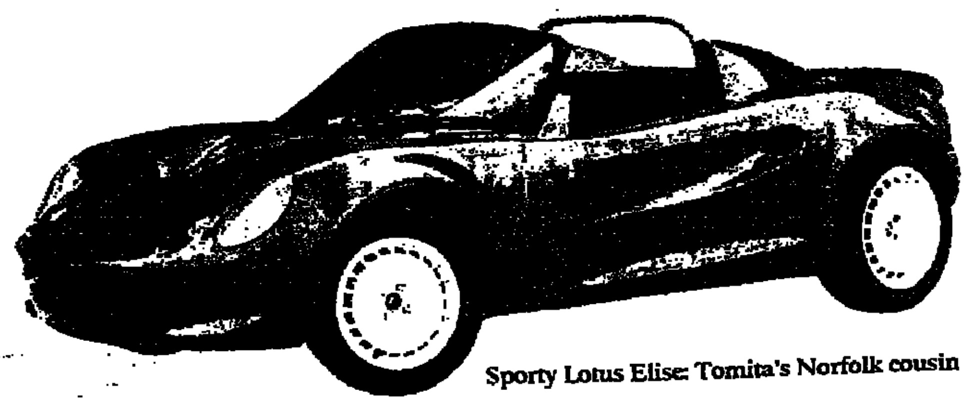
"The history motivated me to buy the car, and it's given me a special thrill in owning it," he says. "It's even still got the original flagpole." But it has not proved such an effective lure now he wants to sell it. "I had the car in with a dealer, who was asking £10,000 in the hope that a Japanese buyer would be interested. However, nothing came of it, so I'm trying to sell it myself for £5,000 — no offers."

AUTOFAX by Les Evans and David Long

ROLLING STONE KEITH RICHARD HAD HIS BENTLEY S3 FLYING SPUR FITTED WITH TURKISH EMBASSY FLAGS TO FOOL THE POLICE...
THE WOODEN SHED FROM WHICH MARCONI SENT EARLY EXPERIMENTAL RADIO TRANSMISSIONS TO THE NORTH POLE NOW FORMS PART OF DAMON HILL'S TWR-ARROWS TEAM HQ...
CONNOLLY LEATHER, AS FOUND IN ALL THE BEST MOTORS, ALSO ADORNS THE FAMOUS GREEN BENCHES IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.
AN AVERAGE FAMILY CAR WILL TRAVEL TWO MILES ON JUST A CUP OF PETROL.

Messrs Tomita and Kaira turned to England to create their dream road-racer, reports **Helen Mound**

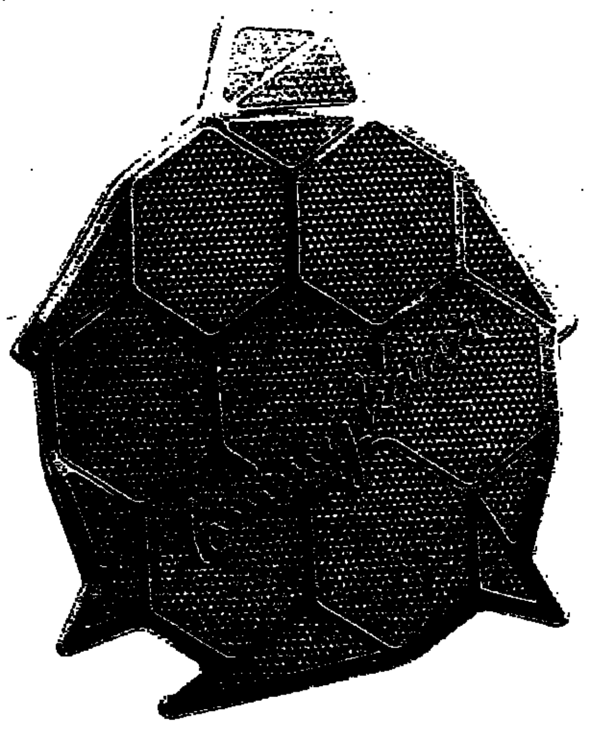


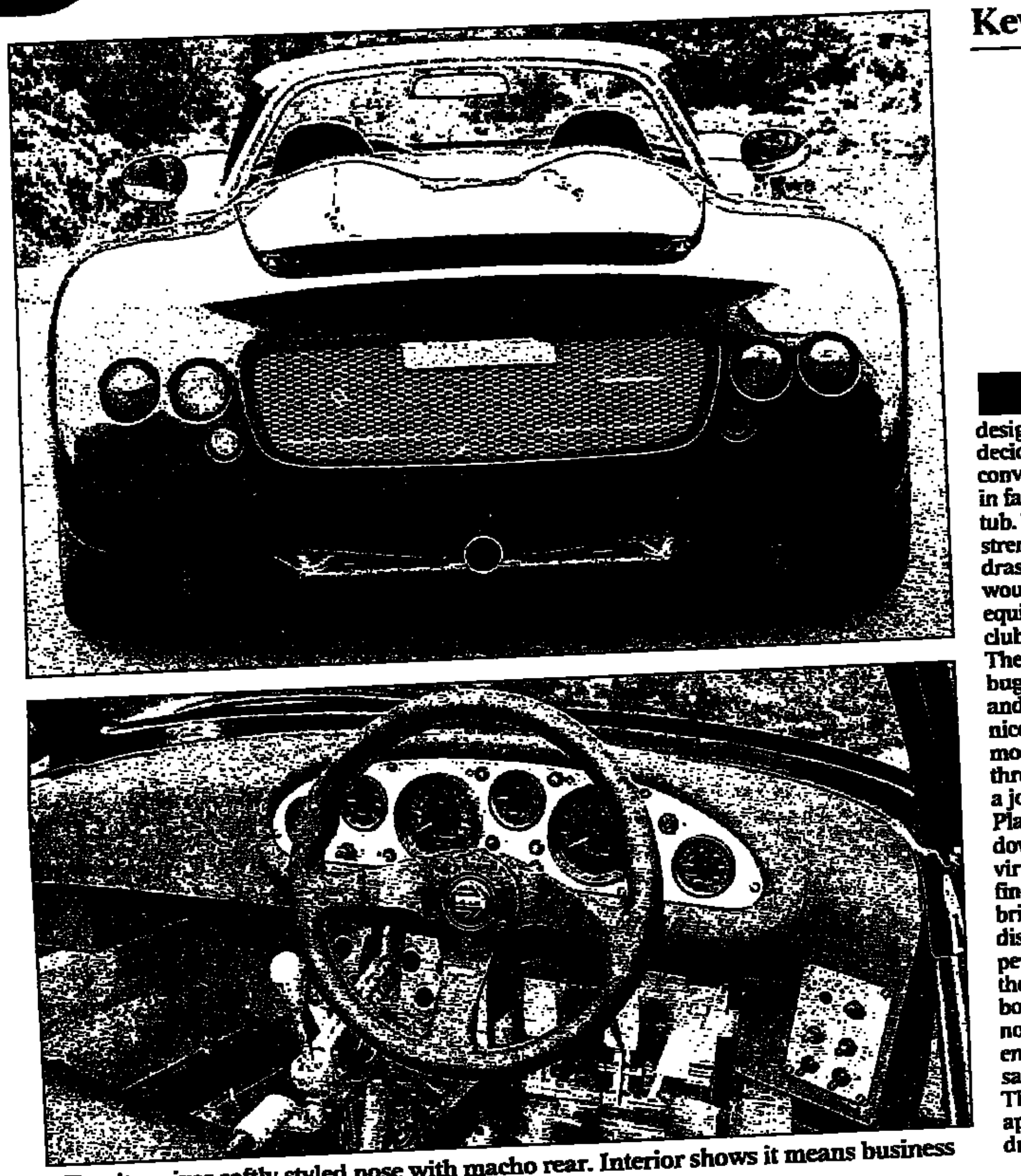


Sporty Lotus Elise: Tomita's Norfolk cousin

TOMITA	ELISE
Engine and chassis: Two-litre Nissan Primera four-cylinder producing 185bhp. Mid-engined with power through rear wheels. Power-to-weight ratio of 265bhp per ton.	**Engine:** 1.8-litre, 118bhp Rover-designed K-series. Mid-engined car driving rear wheels. Power-to-weight ratio, 174bhp per tonne.
Performance: 0 to 60mph in 4.5 seconds, top speed 149mph.	**Performance:** 0-60mph six seconds, top speed 126mph.
Equipment: Very little, if any.	**Equipment:** Well no, still isn't any.
Price: £26,000 (not available in UK).	**Price:** £20,950 and on sale now, though waiting lists are up to a year.

Norfolk: home of Japan's best sportster





Tomita mixes softly styled nose with macho rear. Interior shows it means business

Japan is the centre of world car manufacturing, where they can make anything, anytime cheaper, faster and with more ingenuity than anyone else on earth. Unless you want a sports car... then even the Japanese have to come to Britain for help.

When two Japanese motoring enthusiasts, Yoshikazu Tomita and Kikuo Kaira, wanted to make the step from car tuners to car builders they discovered they had a problem. Japan covers car manufacturers in red tape to such an extent that the pair decided they could not build a sports model in their home country, even though they were adding hundreds of names to their order books.

So Kaira, who spent 25 years in motorsport as a driver and engineer designing Formula 2 cars, turned to his friend, Hiroshi Fushida, an ex-Formula One racing driver and now managing director at Toms GB, an engineering and race car design company based in Hingham, Norfolk.

If they couldn't build the car at home, then they would move to the next best place: Britain, with its high-technology automotive skills. Norfolk was even better, with Hingham just around the corner from Lotus.

Strange then, the likeness between the Japanese newcomer and Lotus's own car, the Elise, a model which has won as much praise as any new car for years.

While Kaira designed and developed a prototype of their dream car, Fushida was helping launch Tomita UK, and in June last year production began on the £26,000 Tommy Kaira ZZ in a small factory in Norfolk, with 300 orders already waiting to be delivered at home in Japan.

Japanese motorists have had a love affair with British cars since they first saw the Mini. Sports cars from Caterham, TVR, Lotus and Morgan are highly desirable in Japan.

But the Tomita is the coolest Japanese car to own because it is designed by a race car expert, a Japanese F1 racing driver had a hand in its development and — this is the coolest bit — it is built in Norfolk, Great Britain. Japanese motorists consider owning a car built down the road from Lotus the cleverest and trendiest thing available.

Fushida admits that building the Tommy Kaira in the UK means a 20 per cent reduction in costs compared with Japan, but there is a another reason why Tomita chose Norfolk. Kikuo Kaira wanted to build a car in "Chapman Country", where Colin Chapman, founded Lotus, one of the world's most famous brand names. "Britain has a great history for low-volume sports cars, it was an ideal place to bring production," says Fushida.

The man in charge of the Tommy Kaira production line, John Freeman, has built cars for DeLorean and Lotus. Starting with 37 sketches and a handful of instructions in Japanese, Tomita UK took five months, from February to June last year, to source the parts for the little sports car. Only dedicated petrol-heads would recognise the Fiat Coupé rear lights and the Nissan Micra side indicators. Arch Motors in Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, produces the aluminium tubs and Rawlson in Dover provides the fibreglass bodies.

Eighty per cent of the car's 2,500 parts are from the UK. Eleven workers at the Norfolk firm assemble them for shipping to Japan, where Tomita sticks on the badges.

Like the Lotus Elise, the Tommy Kaira is more of a road-going race car than a sports car. The interior is bare aluminium, the floor, side steps, pedals, even the gear linkage is naked metal. There are no windows, glovebox, stereo, door locks or boot.

The lights, wipers and indicators are controlled by paddle switches, aircraft style. And it's a tight squeeze into the bucket race seats.

Kaira's taste for simplicity is evident in several neat design features, such as the drilled aluminium pedals and the machine-finished aluminium gearlever. The feather-light fibreglass doors are only six-inches high and have no handles (there is a discreet lever inside instead), and the fair-weather roof spends most of its time cleverly disguised as an engine cover.

The full retro effect is completed with rear-wheel drive and a mid-mounted two-litre engine supplied by Nissan with the fuel injection removed and replaced by quadruple carburettors. Yes, air-breathing carbs redolent of 1960s fire-breathing sports cars — old-fashioned yet full of a character that not even the fuel-injected Elise could rival.

Tuned for 185 brake horse-power and weighing just 670kg, the Tommy Kaira can reach 60mph in around 4.5 seconds. It recently won a 400-metre sprint test in a Japanese motoring magazine, beating a Lotus Elise, Porsche Boxster, Renault Spider and BMW Z3. Top speed is claimed to be close to 149mph, so clearly the huge brakes visible through each wheel are necessary.

Like Caterham and TVR, it is highly likely that Tommy Kaira will have a one-make race series within the next couple of years, where the little sports car will get a real chance to show off its abilities.

But for the immediate future the Norfolk factory is dedicated to supplying the overwhelming demand from road-going drivers in Japan. At a manufacturing rate of three to four cars a week, the waiting list is now a year-and-a-half long.

The Tommy Kaira's styling is among the prettiest around, the soft nose at one end, and the macho and purposeful rear at the other are an ideal mix for a successful sports car, though there is no doubting the similarity to Britain's own lightweight Norfolk-bred sportster.

Although the majority of customers in Japan are men, there's no doubt this would be a hit with both male and female customers here in the West.

Tomita is rather coy, however, on the question of selling the Tommy here. Whether the Elise will come face to face with the Tommy Kaira ZZ on British roads can't be confirmed yet. Tomita UK simply says: "Ask again in 18 months' time when the backlog of Japanese orders has been fulfilled. Then maybe there will be more to tell."

Kevin Eason on the Elise sensation

Lotus's scorching saviour

■ LOTUS tore up the rule book when it designed the Elise, deciding to dump the conventional steel chassis in favour of an aluminium tub. This offers huge strength allied to the sort of drastic weight saving that would have the motoring equivalent of a slimmer's club proclaiming a miracle.

The styling was also new: bug-eyed, sleek, yet stubby and spartan, with the niceties that weigh down modern two-seaters thrown out so that the Elise is a joy to drive.

Plaudits have rained down on the car, with virtually no pundit finding an equal for its brilliant weight distribution, handling and performance. Even though the 1.8-litre K-series, borrowed from Rover, is no fire-breather, there is enough performance to satisfy even a boy racer.

This is a car, however, that appeals to the experienced driver who can enjoy the intricacies of the Lotus design, bred of years of experience from a business started by one of the true geniuses in the motor industry.

Colin Chapman was an enthusiast turned manufacturer, a man whose love of racing led him to produce road cars.

The Elan even provided the inspiration for the Mazda MX5, which went on 30 years later to be the world's best-selling sports car.

■ Chapman's death in 1982 undermined the business, and it was sold first to General Motors and then, in 1993, to the Bugatti Group which was itself soon in trouble.

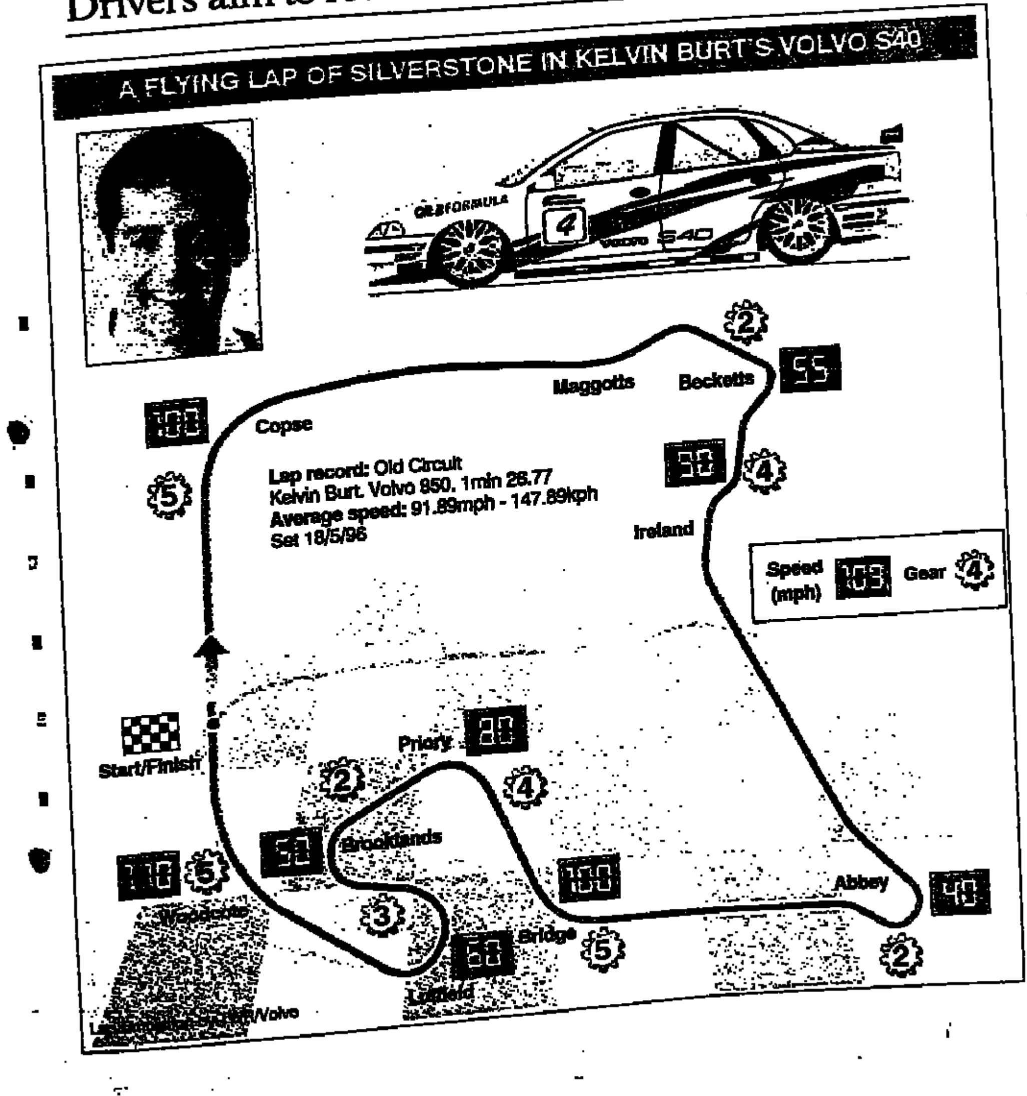
Yet the Elise remained Lotus's great financial hope, a remarkable and innovative car in the best Chapman traditions.

Proton of Malaysia bought into Lotus to underpin its future and now production of the Elise at Hethel in Norfolk is in full swing.

Readers of *CAR 97* get the best news on motor racing before any other newspaper, and next week brings another scoop when we get to see the road cars that Arrows F1 drivers Damon Hill and Pedro Diniz drive, along with a report on our Volvo TWR S40 team.

Drivers aim to reverse their luck at the British Touring Car Championship this weekend, reports **Kevin Eason**

Volvo team set for Silverstone showdown



Kelvin Burt is more Frankie Dettori in stature than Burt Lancaster, but he will need to be quick on the draw today when he pitches into the battle for glory in the British Touring Car Championship.

There will be no prisoners taken as the pair from the Volvo TWR S40 team — Burt and Rickard Rydell, being followed this year by *CAR 97* — face the opposition from the Renault Williams Laguna drivers, Alain Menu and Jason Plato.

Plato and Menu came out on top at the first meeting at Donington earlier this month; but now the Volvo boys reckon they can outgun and outshoot the Renault gang.

Burt, joint third in the drivers' championship table, believes his S40, prepared by TWR — the company that makes Damon Hill's Arrows race car — could repeat his victory last year, though that was in the bulky 850, which has been nudged to one side to make way for the spectacular new S40 saloon. Top speed on the circuit will be only about 115mph, but the Volvo's flexibility through corners should be enough to get the S40 into the position for points.

Burt says: "I think Donington showed we were closest to Renault. It's unbelievably close this year so we're going to be fighting it out the whole way. The S40 is still very new, whereas the Laguna has had four years of steady development. We will go well at Silverstone — and my favourite circuits are the ones I win on.

"We were a little disappointed first time out at Donington and had one or two setbacks which were all to do with luck. But we have a fresh start at Silverstone where we believe the cars will perform extremely well, so we want to get our revenge on the Renaults."

Though the racing looks a two-horse bet, Audi, Ford, Honda and Nissan are all going to Silverstone with something to prove and will be bidding to get into the podium places in the two races — which comprise rounds three and four in the championship.

DHL International Raceday. Programme includes Renault Spider, Vauxhall single-seater, Formula Ford and Vauxhall Vectra races alongside the Autotrader-RAC British Touring Car programme. Admission £15, children (under 16) free, car parking free. Call 0839-123111 for further information.

- *Saturday — 11.15am* and *3.15pm, Touring Cars qualifying.*
- *Sunday 10-30am, pit walkabout/autograph session; 12.05, Touring Cars parade lap; 12.30, Touring Cars race three; 3.30pm, Touring Cars race four.*

Before you buy an £11,000 estate car this winter, find out what's coming in spring. 0800 184284.

AUTHORISED DEALERSHIPS AT A GLANCE

IF YOU CANNOT FIND THE VEHICLE YOU DESIRE CONTACT YOUR AUTHORISED DEALER LISTED BELOW

Alfa Romeo

BERKSHIRE - S.G.T Alfa Romeo, Station Garage, Station Road, Taplow, (Near Maidenhead). Tel: 01628 605353

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE - Hallewell Chesham Road, Amersham. Gary Parker, Martyn Lunnon. Tel: 01494 722191

DORSET - CASTERBRIDGE at London Road, Dorchester, Dorset, DT1 1NE. Julie Mullins 01305 250650

HAMPSHIRE - Clover Leaf Cars A30, Old Basing, Basingstoke, Hants, RG24 7JD. Carl Gomez 01256 55221

HAMPSHIRE - Cleveland Cars Ltd Ash St (A323) Ash, Aldershot Hampshire GU12 6LZ. Phone 01252 334055

OXFORDSHIRE - Hallewell 379 Cowley Road, Oxford, OX4 2BS Contact William Griffiths 01865 772978

STAFFORDSHIRE - Platts of Longton Lightwood Rd Longton Stoke on Trent, Staffs, ST3 4JG. Tel: 01782 599400

SUSSEX - Wilson Purves Ltd S2A Brighton Road, Horsham, West Sussex RH3 5BT Mike Whitaker 01403 221802

ASTON MARTIN

KENT - Lancaster Sevenoaks Ltd 92 London Road, Sevenoaks, TN13 1BA. David Bradshaw 01732 456300

NORWICH - Stratton Motor Company (Norfolk) Ltd Ipswich Rd Long Stratton. Charlie Skelton Tel: 01508 530491

ASTON MARTIN

SURREY - H.W.M. LIMITED at New Zealand Avenue, Walton on Thames, KT12 1AT. Paul Spires 01932 220404

BMW

AVON - DICK LOVETT at Portwall Lane, Redcliffe Way, Bristol, Avon, BS1 6NG 0117 929 2402, 0117 982 2727

BEDFORDSHIRE - ELMS BMW. Shuttleworth Road, Bedford, in Bedfordshire MK41 0EP. Please Tel: 01234 360411

BEDFORDSHIRE - IVOR HOLMES 76 - 88 Marsh Road, Luton, Bedfordshire, LU3 2NJ. Contact 01582 576622

HERTFORDSHIRE - Specialist Cars London Road, Stevenage, Herts. Tel 01438 760200 Web http://www.specialistcars.co.uk/bmw/

KENT - Newmans of Canterbury Vauxhall Road, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 1RA. Please Call 01227 454341

LONDON - COOPER BISHOPGATE 20 Paul Street, London, EC2A 4JH. For Any Information Tel: 0171 377 8811

LONDON - MLG of CHISWICK at 492 - 496 Chiswick High Road, London, W4 5TT. Please call 0181 995 1683

ASTON MARTIN

BMW

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Ford is staging a mid-year relaunch for the Escort. But it needs a whole new model, reports **Kevin Eason**

'Britain's favourite car is in a serious mid-life crisis . . .'

Reports of the death of the Ford Escort have clearly been exaggerated . . . but there is no doubt that Britain's favourite car is facing a serious mid-life crisis.

What are we to make of the fact that Ford has brought forward a package of changes which it launched this week as 1997 mid-model-year improvements? Since when did the half-year point become the focus for a relaunch? Probably since Ford's top brass took some time off from plotting their grandiose world plans and had a look around Europe's showrooms.

With a replacement for the Escort still three years away, the venerable small Ford faces tough competition from some startlingly good rivals. The Escort looks like an old-timer up against upstarts such as the Renault Megane, Peugeot's 306, Volkswagen's Golf and the Rover 200, and Ford needs to start shaking up the car's moribund image.

So in comes this mid-year "wide-ranging series of changes", as Ford puts it, *though most will surely pass most motorists by unless they understand the labyrinthine complexity of Ford's price and specifications lists.*

From the outside, the relaunch — which will be trumpeted in new television advertising — seems to be little more than the introduction of a few cosmetic changes which will hardly have Britain's car-buying public queueing up around the showrooms.

Try to contain your excitement, but this week's press release from Ford lists some of the "significant enhancements" we can all look forward to: new body-colour bumpers, new velour interior trims — including a unique Jacquard fabric (a weave of variegated weave or pattern, so there) — rear head-restraints for the Si, even driver seat power adjustment on all LX models.

Body-colour bumpers? Doesn't seem such a big deal but don't fret: it does get better; estates are now the same price as four and five-door models — an £825 cut on the estate if you take the 1.8 16v Ghia model. LX and Si models are also the same price, with both getting more "goodies": the LX, sporty bumpers and foglamps; the Si, 15-inch wheels, new seats and body-coloured mirrors.

There is also the return of the GTi, a new entry for the Ford range which has dumped the old XR badge in favour of the one most recognised by buyers. The £14,000 sportster gets the 1.8-litre, 16-valve engine together with anti-lock brakes and sports seats as standard.

And Ford is giving customers the choice of doing without a sunroof in favour of air-conditioning — though that is an extra £250, please.

At bottom, this is little more than a marketing splurge designed to try to distract car buyers from the obvious fact *that the model is being rapidly overtaken by rivals and events.*

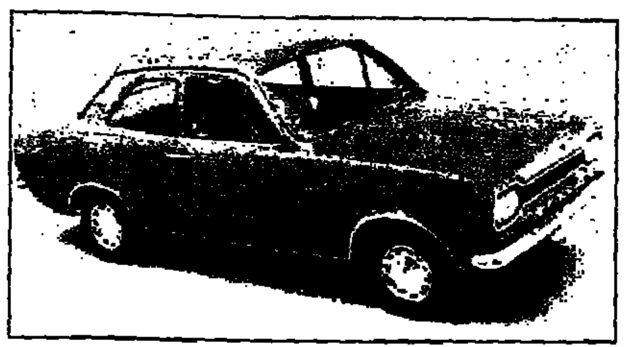
Halewood on Merseyside, which makes the car for Britain, is losing the Escort to a German sister factory which will produce the car for the next century — and there is a hot chance that even the Escort name will be ditched as Ford searches out a glitzier image for its next small car.

The Escort might have a new summer suit but it will have to cover its middle-aged frame for some time yet while Ford gets the next generation ready to take over. With more than 4 million sold, the Escort is facing up to the sad fact that age has overtaken it.

But whatever the new model looks like, whatever it is called and however good it is, it will have to be pretty special to fill the place in British life taken over the years by the Escort.

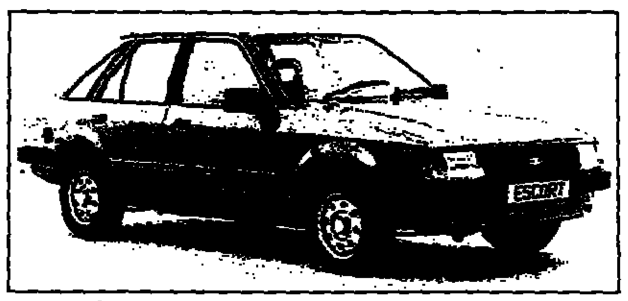
Escort MKV range is already looking tired, hence the swift revamp — but will customers notice the changes?

SMALL CAR, BIG HISTORY

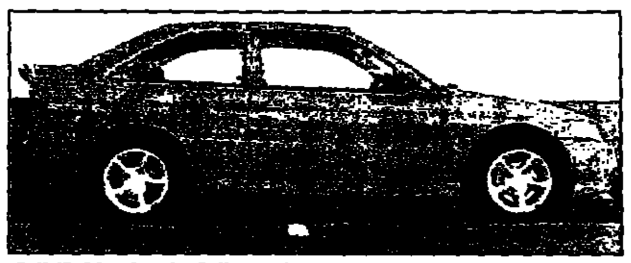


MKI Escort was offered to the British public in 1968

Liverpool's Halewood plant produced the 1975 MKII



First front-wheel-drive version was the 1980 MKIII



MKIV logically followed in 1994 — Britain's best seller

- MORE THAN 18.5 million Escorts worldwide have been sold, second only to the Model T on Ford's all-time list.
- THE CAR *went into production in 1967, selling 4.35 million units over five generations in Britain.*
- ESCORT *has been Britain's top car for 14 of the last 15 years.*

NEW MODELS

Prices: £10,835 to £17,915.
Range: 1.3-litre (60PS, top speed 96mph, economy 40.4mpg combined), 1.4i (75PS, 105mph, 32.5mpg), 1.6i (90PS, 110mph, 35.3mpg), 1.8i (115PS, 122mph, 34.9mpg) 1.8TD (70PS, 101mph, 42.8mpg), 1.8TDI (90PS, 107mph, 44.1mpg).
Equipment: includes air-conditioning £250 option instead of sunroof. GTi: body kit, and tinted glass.

New Escort? No danger. **Helen Mound** spotted few differences, and no improvements

ROAD TEST

■ **EVEN THE MOST** experienced fan of Ford's mid-range hatchbacks, saloons and estates would be hard pushed to tell what's new about it.

I looked at the top, the sides, even underneath but I still struggled to spot a single change. The dashboard is the familiar Ford layout; the dials and switches are unchanged; the steering wheel and handbrake are the same as on previous models.

Out on the road, I discovered the same weary 1.8-litre, 16-valve engine which has about as much energy as a marathon runner facing a steep hill at the 24th mile. It also sounds rough compared with other 1.8 powerplants. If you're prepared to work the gearbox and accelerator constantly, you can force the engine to perform, though even the slightest incline manages to shave 20mph off the top speed. And the gear-change remains rubbery and inexact.

Handling is benign, neither exciting or poor. Take a corner fast and nothing much happens except the car shows a preference for understeer. Steering is equally average.

I systematically worked my way around the cabin looking for an element of the Escort's newness for this much-publicised mid-year relaunch. Nothing technical or cosmetic appeared to have changed. Even the traditional Ford build quality seems to have remained undisturbed: my car had at least three infuriating rattles I couldn't locate. Undeterred I took a long slow walk around the outside of the car looking for changes to its exterior. Surely here I could spot the new bit? But no, the body panels, bumpers, badges, door handles, even the choice of exterior colours all seemed unchanged.

Eventually I cracked it: Ford's shiny new-style alloys. They are the only change that a new Escort driver is likely to spot on this car. A thorough scan through the brochure revealed that my Escort 1.8i Si also benefits from new seats (they felt the same to me), new body-coloured mirrors and (oh, joy) a new silver insert on the gearlever.

With the "ten Escorts at the same price" advertising campaign launched this week and price reductions of as much as £895 across the range, it seems only a chequebook could really reveal the extent of the changes to the new Ford Escort.

Despite its promised "newness", the Escort is really the same old dependable motor it always has been.

DR DASHBOARD

As an old Ford, am I past it?

Q ***Good morning, doctor, but apologies already for troubling you with what seems like such a trivial problem.***

A Not at all. The nurse has just given me your notes so let's have a look-see at who you are: ummmmm, Mr Escort, Mr F. Escort, aged 30 and you come from Halewood on Merseyside. Yes, I can see that would be a problem. Previously quite successful; you don't look the sort who is suffering.

Q ***On the face of it, I am not. I am top of the tree really, most popular for the past 15 years, best in the organisation after some old codger from years ago who seemed to think he was in the A-Team — called himself Mr Model T or something. Now I am looking at redundancy, just like that, after all these years of service. I can't take rejection. What can I do?***

A See what you mean. Millions have faced redundancy and bounced back. This is surely no more than a mid-life crisis, Mr Escort, the sort of thing we all go through. Describe your symptoms, if you will.

Q ***Well, I've stopped getting hot flushes — I think somebody sorted out the coolant problem — but I'm definitely heavier and not as sprightly as a lot of the newcomers to this game. I have a horrible feeling that I'm getting past it.***

A There must be life left in the old banger yet. Put this behind you and try to look at life afresh. Put away those old flares — wheel-arches, that is. Try finding new friends, a new look, perhaps. After all, it has worked for the Labour Party.

Q ***Come on, doc. I've gone for all the usual remedies: a new suit, a bit of makeup, but nobody's fooled. I am basically over the hill and the company knows that. I fear the worst.***

A Which is what? So the organisation is enamoured with something new. It never lasts and you can prove you are the top honcho as you have always been.

Q ***This time it's serious. My job is going to Germany and they are bringing in a new model to replace me. Apparently, they are even going to take my title away, so Escort will not exist any more inside the organisation. I'll probably become something obscure. There is a precedent: it happened before to a chum of mine called Sierra; he was replaced by something called the Mondeo. The name doesn't even mean anything.***

A Be fair, the word Escort has its own connotations: you know, the sort of car that needs a couple of shots of four-star to loosen up, only gets lively after a few fivers have changed hands and then it will take you anywhere you want. Stop moaning: you are a living leg end, sorry, I think I meant legend there. What help do you need, or is this the sort of mid-life crisis which will end in tears, running away from home, setting up with some pretty young Japanese company which pretends it has something better to offer?

Q ***Actually, my little sister already did that. You know her — Fiesta. Well, she has got alongside that Mazda on a 1-2-1 number out of Dagenham. You can't tell them apart these days. Sickening really, and there I am being all individual and Britain's top of the pops. Is there no way to hang on to my public? Will they all desert me?***

A Sorry, Escort old chap. But the only way out of *this is to cut your prices.* Yes, I know cheapest isn't always best but you're on the way down, and better to slide out of view gracefully, well-remembered, than go down kicking and screaming into history's scrapyard. Suck that radiator grille in, straighten your velour upholstery and look the world straight in the headlamps. You are still a star.

Passat: now the one to make a pass at

Stuart Birch enjoys VW's fine revamp of a formerly dull car

Time was when the Volkswagen Passat attracted such epithets as "worthy" and "solid" — not words which send sales soaring and customer pulses racing.

But now things have changed. The name's the same but the new Passat can be associated with adjectives such as stylish and handsome, while more powerful versions are positively sporty. So confident is VW of its new car's *impending success that it predicts sales will increase fourfold in the next year.*

The new Passat has been a long time coming to Britain, and for months, dealers' showrooms have had left-hand-drive examples on display because production of right-hand-drive cars was lagging. Now they are here — and they are not disappointing.

The Passat needs to pinch sales from the Vauxhall Vectra, Ford Mondeo and Peugeot 406: it has plenty going for it. Major attractions are its quality, refinement, and spacious interior and boot.

But as many a company proud of its engineering has learnt to its cost, cars need to look good, too.

VW says the new Passat is much more of a "want-to-own" car than the old model. So it has a distinctively domed roof and pronounced wheel arches which are significant elements of the new Beetle, already seen in concept form. Designers have given it an attractive nose, ensured that its deep flanks (the window line is high) do not look in need of liposuction and that its tail is sharply defined. The overall effect is impressive.

All this sits on a chassis derived from sister company Audi's highly successful A4. The ride is fairly soft and the car rolls a bit when hustled through a corner, but the handling is fine and the car's general roadholding is excellent.

Engine choice is wide, including a 100bhp 1.6, a brace of 1.8s with 125 and 150bhp (thanks to a turbo) and a 1.9-litre turbodiesel with 90 or 110bhp. Coming later will be a VR5 2.3-litre and the 30-valve 193bhp V6 which will make the top Passat a real scorcher with near-150mph potential.

At £13,995 on the road, the entry-level 1.6 litre Passat E undoubtedly offers good value for money, with anti-lock brakes, central locking with security protection, twin airbags, driver's seat height adjustment, front electric windows, front and rear seatbelt tensioners, height and reach-adjustable steering wheel, power steering, radio/cassette and a good deal more.

However, performance is unexciting; steep hills call for plenty of gearchanging. Motorway cruising speeds see the engine revving up towards 4,000rpm, which is too high.

Much better is the delightful 110bhp turbodiesel. This fine engine gets the Passat to 60mph in about 11.5 seconds and on to 122mph, says VW. It *needs only a gallon of fuel every 47.5 miles in town and* every 56.5 miles at 75mph.

Of the other petrol engines available at present, the 125bhp 1.8-litre is lively but the 150bhp with light-pressure turbo is positively lusty, taking the Passat to 60mph in 8.5 seconds. It suits the car admirably.

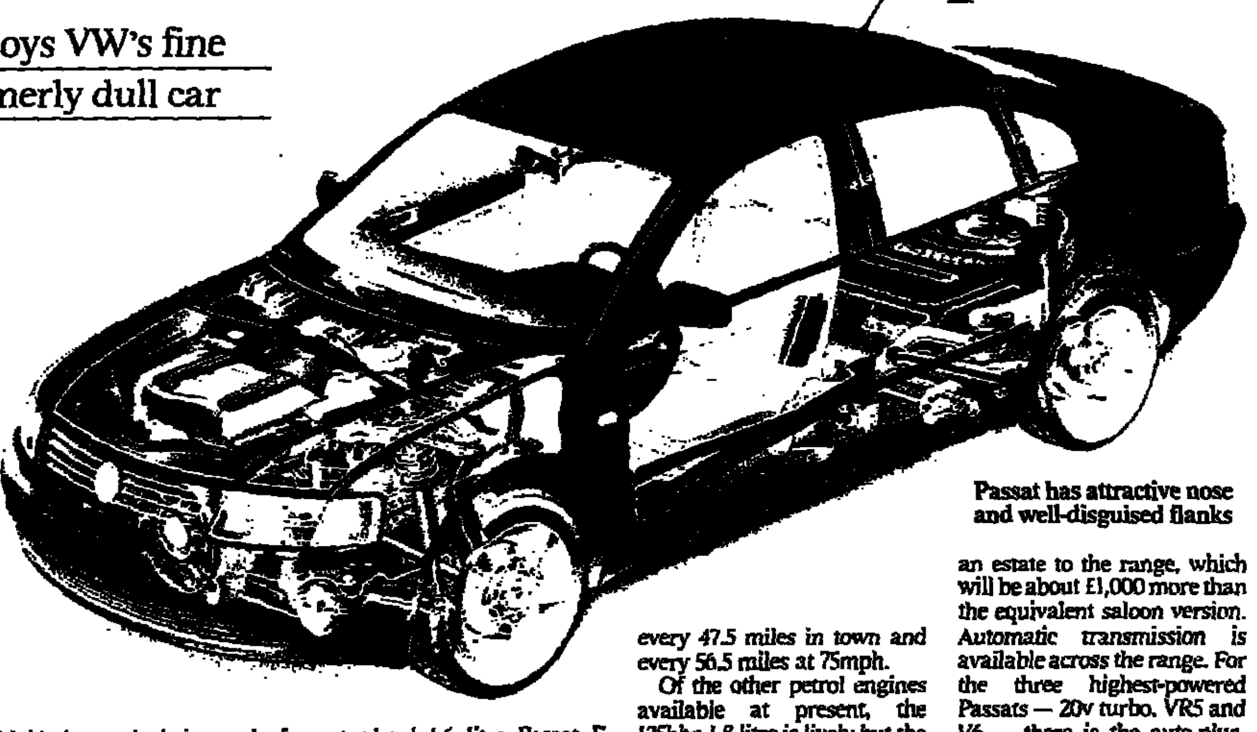
Like the new *Audi A6*, the Passat's interior is all about fine design. It has a pleasant, cosseting ambience. It looks particularly good in lighter colours, and up-market SE versions with wood trim and (slippery) wood gearlever knob are very classy. Neat design points include a cleverly designed foldaway twin cup/can holder.

All VWs get a three-year mechanical warranty and the Passat also has an 11-year body protection warranty.

In the autumn, VW will add an estate to the range, which will be about £1,000 more than the equivalent saloon version. *Automatic transmission* is available across the range. For the three highest-powered Passats — 20v turbo, VR5 and V6 — there is the auto-plus-manual Tiptronic system. The top-of-the-range V6 has four-wheel drive as standard and its price on the road will be a highly competitive £21,841.

Passat's residual values are predicted to remain high. CAP Monitor reckons the 1.6S — expected to be a popular version, particularly with companies — will retain 46 per cent of its value after three years or 60,000 miles, compared with 33 per cent for the Vectra 1.6LS, 32 *per cent* for a 406 1.8LX and 34 per cent for the Laguna 1.8RT

Which is another reason why VW is confident that a lot of potential customers are waiting to make a pass at the new Passat. Until now *most* have *simply passed it by.*



Passat has attractive nose and well-disguised flanks

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CARMART: YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S NEW, AND WHAT'S USED, ON THE FORECOURTS

SPARE PARTS

OWNERS of S-class Mercedes-Benz saloons are being warned to take their cars back to dealers for vital brake checks. The cars, made between June, 1995, and December, 1996, will be given a free examination. The recall comes after eight cars worldwide were found to have too small a gap between the front wheels and the brake hoses, which could lead to the wheels coming into contact with the hoses on full lock. Mercedes says there is no danger of brake failure, but wants to inspect the 3,096 cars in Britain which might be affected. The recall is a blot on the record for Mercedes, which has been enjoying record sales in Britain: its C and E-class saloons are mounting huge opposition for BMW while the S-class has also recovered from rocky early sales to become the pre-eminent choice of limousine for managing directors and chairmen.

■ AUTOMATIC versions of Ford's Scorpio Ghia X are now £1,000 cheaper. Ford says that leather interior trim is now standard across the Scorpio range while prices of the Ultima model come down by £510. Free mobile telephones are available with each new Ford.

■ PRICES for the Rover 600 range are up an average 1.8 per cent, but the company boasts a sales increase of 25 per cent over the past two months. Selling the 600 has been a struggle for Rover, the car never really capturing the public imagination, outgunned by Ford's Mondeos at the lower end and the BMW 3-series and Mercedes C-class at the other. However, Rover is including extras to sell cars, so in come revisions to the ride, new colours, standard air-conditioning, and alloy wheels on two-litre models. The range starts at £15,140 on the road for the 618i.

Rover 600 range sales improve after a poor start

Sports car for shy extroverts

Stuart Birch on

Seat's Cordoba

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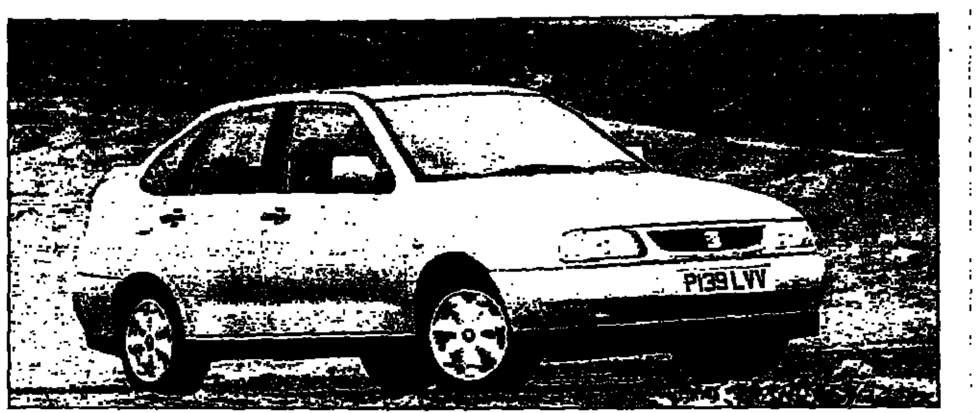
Cordoba squeezes under £13,000 with high-spec equipment and 100bhp engine

Billed as Britain's first sub-£13,000 sports saloon to offer air-conditioning as standard, the Seat Cordoba SXE offers more than cold air — it also has undemanding behaviour and impeccable road manners.

The Cordoba SXE qualifies as sub-£13,000 car only by five pounds, and as a sports saloon because it has been equipped with a 100 brake horsepower engine, which does indeed give it eager performance, though it is hardly a Tarmac-burner.

Seat is part of the Volkswagen Group, so not surprisingly there is plenty of VW engineering and technology in the Cordoba but it has sufficient individuality to mark it out as different from the Wolfsburg set. Kevin Rose, Seat UK's director, believes buyers of the company's wares to be cautious extroverts. That means they want the warm feeling provided by VW quality and engineering but they also look for a sporty edge and styling that singles out their car — but not too much — from the pack.

The Cordoba fits that need, although its tubby styling failed to set my pulse racing. But driving it on a winding road and using some of its 100bhp, I found the car responsive, enjoyable — yes, even sporty.

It is also very good value for money: the Cordoba SXE comes as standard not only with air conditioning — which is undoubtedly a luxury but also makes a real contribution to safety by helping to keep a driver alert — but also with twin airbags, anti-lock brakes, power steering, remote central locking, anti-theft immobiliser and alarm. There is also a three-year unlimited mileage warranty, something which puts many competitors still offering the single paltry year in the shade.

The Cordoba stayed with me for six weeks and was kept busy. My wife, a teacher in outer London, drove it for her daily commute, a round trip of more than 40 miles, and saw best and worst average fuel consumption per tank-full, of 37 and 33 miles to the gallon of unleaded. She appreciated its enormous boot (school teachers carry enough boxes, books and bags to qualify as freight), its excellent driving position, its quick-to-warm heater, its light controls — although the gearlever handle started to unscrew itself after a week — and its snappy performance.

She did not like the stretch to the electric window switches and the lack of one-shot driver window opening. She found the Seat's seats — if that mix of title and equipment is not too clumsy — comfortable, but I did not. The car's eager performance and secure road-holding encourages nippy driving but I wanted more seat support during this sort of thing. We were both infuriated by the rear spoiler, which reduced rear vision.

Interior decor was unexciting and the dashboard was covered in a sort of simulated rhino hide, or was it elephant, or none of those but a contour map? I'm not sure.

But we were both impressed by the quality of a car at this price level and by its equipment — particularly that lovely air conditioning.

CORDOBA

Engine: four-cylinder 1.6-litre developing 100bhp to front wheels via five-speed gearbox.
Performance: 0 to 62 mph in 11.3 seconds; top speed, 116mph.
Consumption: average 36.2 miles to the gallon.
Price: £12,995.

USED CAR BRIEF

NISSAN MICRA
Cute and bubble-topped, the new-shaped Micra is nearly four years old yet has the edge in looks over many more recent arrivals in the hotly-contested mini-car market. Made in Britain at Washington, Tyne and Wear, the Micra packs maximum interior space into its tiny curved bodywork. Available with 1.0 and 1.3-litre petrol engines and three and five-door hatchback.

✓ **GOOD NEWS:** Desirable, stylish small car that benefits from excellent build quality and lively yet frugal engines. A world away from its square-edged, sawn-off predecessor in looks and also far more solid in feel and construction.

⊘ **BAD NEWS:** Beware ex-learner school cars likely to have worn clutches and multiple minor dents and dings to the bodywork because Micra is popular with driving instructors. Camshaft can be noisy and check the cambelt has been changed with service intervals.

LOOK FOR: Cars from 1994 as these will still be covered by the Nissan three year warranty. The 1.3-litre engine is the one to go for with its 75bhp making the Micra a fun, nippy car in town and a competent motorway performer. The CVT (constantly variable transmission) version is worth considering.

AVOID: Dull solid colours, which are as attractive in the used market as acne. Instead go for a shiny metallic to keep your car's value. Numerous special editions, many created by dealerships, are usually not worth paying extra for.

SAFETY: The Micra does well in the Department of Transport "Choosing Safety" tables, rating alongside the Vauxhall Corsa, ahead of the Rover Mini, Fiat Panda and Citroen AX, but behind the Renault Clio and Peugeot 205.

INSURANCE: Cover from AA Insurance (0800 444777) on a 1994 1.3 Micra LX costs a 55-year old professional, male or female, living in Winchester with full no claims £121 a year fully comprehensive. A 22-year old male, with one year no claims in south London, pays £732, a similar female £575.

£ **PRICES:** Expect to pay £3,755 for a 1993 K-reg 1.0L three-door, £4,250 for a 1993 L-reg 1.0L five-door, £4,900 for a 1993 K-reg 1.3LX three-door, £7,000 for a 1994 L-reg 1.3SLX five-door, £7,250 for a 1995 N-reg 1.3 Super S three-door and £7,750 for a 1996 N-reg 1.0GX three-door.

REPLACEMENT PARTS: (Prices include VAT); clutch assembly £120; exhaust system £185; catalytic converter £450; front brakepads (pair) £40; alternator (exchange) £200; front headlamp £100.

OVERALL: The 1.3 litre LX, with electric windows, central locking, tinted glass and sunroof makes sound value. Various bizarrely-named special editions are worth little more than the cars they are based on. Overall, an excellent small car with good build quality, and great looks.

What to look for in a smart Saab or simple Seat

FORECOURT

■ SAAB'S 900 (1989-1995) offers serious professional presence on the road. It also benefits from being just that little bit different, according to the CAP Black Book.

Covering 200,000 miles is no problem for such a solidly built car and one of the best buys is the 1992 K-reg three-door Turbo 16-valve, which, on average mileage, should cost around £9,500. The 900 can be pricey, with parts and service costs dearer than rival models.

Watch too for turbo lag, that split-second delay between the accelerator being depressed and power being delivered by the turbo-charger, which can be disconcerting for drivers used to normally aspirated engines. But if the turbo chatters or whistles noisily, give the car a miss; there could be problems ahead. The 900 is easy to "clock", so check for worn-smooth gear knob, steering wheel and pedal rubbers, indicating it has travelled further than the odometer suggests.

Go for the car with the highest equipment level, and steer clear of a turbo with automatic transmission. A full dealer service history is a must, otherwise this car is always a joy to drive no matter the mileage, and one that should last forever.

■ SEAT'S Ibiza (1987-92) is everyman transport: cheap, simple, practical and easy to maintain. It also has a dopey name, a bizarre dashboard, can seem flimsy, and loses value quickly. The Ibiza's reputation for poor build-quality means trade-in values can prove a shock for the unwary, which makes them cheap to buy but depressing to sell. Cars with one previous owner and a full history are recommended. Good buy is a 1992 K-reg 1.5 GLX five-door on average mileage, which should cost around £3,000. Even on such a recent car, arrange an AA or RAC inspection.

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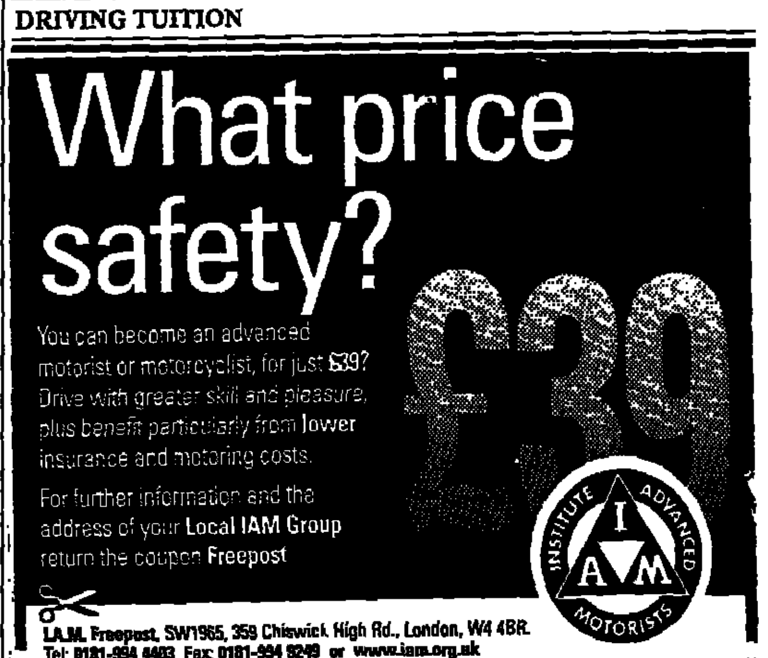

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96N	C200 Elegance Auto met. hide 17" alloys ixt	16T	£26,995
96P	C250D Elegance Auto met. esr. ew. r'st	5T	£24,995
96P	C250TD Elegance Auto met. esr. ew. r'st	9T	£27,995
	E-CLASS		
94L	200TE Auto met. esr. ew 7 seats. alloys. rst	48T	£19,995
95N	E200 Avantgarde met. hide. a/c. esr. hhw. r'st	9T	£29,995
93L	E220 Coupé Auto hide alloys. esr r'st	46T	£24,995
94M	E220T Auto met. esr ew 7 seats r'st	19T	£25,995
96N	E230 Elegance Auto met. hide. 3 dir. a/c. r'st	20T	£32,995
96N	E230 Avantgarde Auto met. hide. a/c. esr. r/st	11T	£33,995
94L	E280T Auto met. esr. 6 holes 7 seats. r'st	33T	£26,995
96P	E280 Elegance Auto met. hide. a/c. r'st.	5T	£38,995
94M	E300TD Auto met. esr. ew. r'st	16T	£27,995
96N	E300D Elegance Auto met. hn. r/st	14T	£29,995
95N	E320T Auto met. eds. 7 seats. ctg. r'st	24T	£34,995
96N	E320 Elegance Auto met. hide hts. eds air cd	4T	£38,995
96P	E320 Avantgarde Auto met. hide air efs hts	7T	£42,995
	S-CLASS & SLs		
97P	S280 Auto hide. efs, 6 holes cd	2T	£44,995
96N	SL320 Auto met. hide rcs acc cd	19T	£59,995
95M	SL500 Auto met. hide. acc. rcs. 2 holes. cd	13T	£64,995
96N	S500 Coupé Auto met hide. esp ww/sw	12T	£69,995
94M	S500L Auto met. hide acc. hts. 2 holes. r/st	39T	£45,995
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93L	600SL Auto met. ext hide. acc. 17" alloys. r/st	25T	£66,995

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	C-CLASS		
95N	C180 Classic Auto Azurite blue. esr. ehw. hs	20T	£18,995
96N	C180 Eleg Auto Green black, grey cloth, a/c	15T	£22,995
96P	C180 Elegance Auto Silver, blue cloth, a/c	9T	£24,995
96N	C200 Eleg Auto Green black, grey cloth, a/c	9T	£23,995
96N	C200 Elegance Auto Silver, blue cloth, a/c, cc	13T	£23,995
96N	C200 Elegance Auto Azurite blue, air con	9T	£23,995
93L	C220 White, blue cloth, esr, ews, lar, alloys	34T	£16,995
94L	C220 Elegance Auto Malachite green, hide, cd	2T	£21,995
95N	C280 Eleg Auto Azurite blue, blk cloth, cd only	6T	£27,995
96N	C280 Eleg Auto Tourmaline, hide, air con, cd	9T	£31,995
	E-CLASS		
95M	E200 Estate Auto White, grey cloth, esr, ew	20T	£23,995
94L	E200 Estate Auto Midnight Blue, rear seat	45T	£19,995
93K	220E Auto Pearl blue, grey cloth, esr, ew	23T	£17,995
94L	E220 Auto Midnight blue, grey cloth, lar, dhr	50T	£16,495
94M	E220 Estate Auto metallic, rear seat, walnut	39T	£23,995
96N	E220 Estate Auto Green black, r/seat, hhww	19T	£29,995
96N	E230 Eleg Auto Silver, black cloth, rs, rc	10T	£29,995
95N	E230 Eleg Auto Ruby red, black cloth, a/c	16T	£30,995
96N	E230 Eleg Auto Azurite blue, blue cloth, a/c	13T	£31,995
96P	E280 Elegance Auto Tourmaline, hide, a/c, esr	5T	£38,995
92J	300E Pearl grey, grey cloth, esr, ew, cc, aw	53T	£16,995
96N	E300 Diesel Estate Auto Ruby red, 7 seats	19T	£29,995
96P	E300 Diesel Eleg Auto Silver, blk hide, a/c, 8aw	5T	£33,995
93L	E320 Pearl blue, hide, air con, 8aw, cd	58T	£21,995
96N	E320 Eleg Auto Green black, hide, a/c	18T	£39,995
	S-CLASS & SLs		
97P	S280 Azurite blue, hide, 6aw, efsx2, esr, ++	2T	£P.O.A.

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	C-CLASS		
96P	C180 Esprit Auto Green black, esr, lar, 6 holes	7T	£23,495
96N	C180 Elegance Auto Onyx, air con	9T	£22,995
96P	C200 Elegance Auto Azurite, grey cloth, music	5T	£26,495
96P	C200 Sport Auto Silver, black cloth, esr, e/w	9T	£26,995
95N	C220 Sport Auto Ruby, esr, lar	17T	£24,995
96P	C220D Classic Auto Silver, black cloth, music	5T	£24,995
96P	C230 Komp Sport Ruby, esr, ew, lar, 17" AMG	7T	£27,995
96P	C280 Eleg Auto Green blk, hide, eds, air con	10T	£32,995
	E-CLASS		
95N	E200 Classic Auto Silver, esr, ew, cd	23T	£25,995
95N	E200 Avantgarde Azurite, hide, elm, hhww	17T	£27,995
95N	E220 SE Auto Azurite, air con, ww, lar	28T	£24,995
96N	E220 Eleg Auto Smoke, black cloth, esr, cd	4T	£28,995
96P	E230 Estate Eleg Auto Azurite, cloth, music	5T	£34,995
94M	E280 Estate Auto Onyx, MB tex, a/c, rfs, ww	28T	£29,995
92K	300CE 24V Almandine, hide, a/c, c/c, duchat	53T	£23,995
96N	E320 Estate Auto Tourmaline, hide, a/c, efs	4T	£39,995
96N	E320 Eleg Green black, hide, air con, hww, 6m	6T	£39,995
97P	E320 Eleg Aqua, hide, full AMG, high spec	5T	P.O.A.
	S-CLASS & SLs		
96N	S320 Azurite, grey hide, efs, 8h alloys, music	14T	£43,995
96P	S320 Green black, hide, clm, efs+m, 8h, cd	4T	£45,995
96N	SL320 96 Mdl Imperial red, hide, 12h, c/c, rcs	11T	£57,995
96P	SL500 Ruby red, hide, hts, 8h, clm	4T	£79,995
96P	SL500 Tourmaline, hide, hts, 8h, glass top	3T	£79,995
96N	SL600 Silver, grey hide, 96 model, c/c, cd	7T	£84,995
96P	CL420 Green black, black hide, full spec	3T	£69,995
95M	S500 Coupe Silver, black hide, high spec	23T	£64,995
96N	S600 Limo Blue black, two tone hide	20T	£74,995

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	C-CLASS		
96N	C180 Eleg Auto Azurite, blue cloth, cc	10T	£21,995
96N	C200T Eleg Est Man Azurite blue, mush hide	12T	£26,995
96N	C200T Eleg Est Man Grn black, grey cloth, rc	5T	£26,995
93L	C220 Eleg Auto Almandine, grey cloth, thr, ctg	35T	£20,995
96N	C220 Eleg Auto Green blk, hide, a/c, eds	11T	£29,995
96N	C280 Eleg Auto Ruby red, black cloth, a/c, r/c	13T	£29,995
	E-CLASS		
93K	200TE Auto Pearl blue, grey cloth, esr, rfs, ew	60T	£17,995
94L	E200T Auto White, grey cloth, esr, ew rfs	47T	£19,995
96N	E200T Classic Auto Silver, black, rfs, esr, rc	9T	£31,995
93L	E220 Auto Blue black, grey cloth, ww, c/c	30T	£19,995
94M	E220 Auto Azurite, grey cloth ww, cc	18T	£21,995
95M	E220T Auto Blue blk, mush cloth, rfs, lar, ctg	18T	£26,995
94M	E220 Cabriolet Silver, black hide, 8 holes, cd	24T	£35,995
95N	E320 Eleg Smoke silver, blk hide, full spec	20T	£37,995
96N	E320 Eleg Green black, mush hide, full spec	15T	£38,995
91J	500E Auto Blue black, grey, air con	75T	£27,995
	S-CLASS & SLs		
95N	S280 Smoke silver, mushroom hide, e/sunroof	18T	£34,995
96N	S280 Ruby red, mushroom cloth, esr, 15h, c/c	15T	£34,995
96P	S320 Blue black, black hide, c/c efs	9T	£47,995
89F	420SL Silver, black hide, c/c	23T	£28,995
96P	CL420 Azurite, mushroom hide, parktronic	8T	£67,995
95N	S500L Azurite, mushroom hide, full spec	19T	£59,995
96P	S500 Limo Smoke silver, mush hide, rs, adm	10T	£62,995
95M	SL500 Brilliant silver, blue lthr, c/c, rcs, 8h	3T	£64,995
96P	SL500 Tourmaline, mushroom hide, hts, 6 holes	4T	£78,995
93L	S600 Coupe Nautic blue hide, AMG wheels	57T	£58,995
95N	SL600 Silver, black hide, full spec	35T	£71,995

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	C-CLASS		
94M	C180 Elegance Auto met. lsw & g. r/st	26T	£19,995
95N	C180 Sport 5 Speed esr. ew. ctg. fca. spoiler	9T	£20,995
96N	C180 Elegance met. air. c/c. ctg. r/st. srd	9T	£22,995
96N	C200 Elegance Auto met. air. c/c. r/st	9T	£25,595
96P	C200 Elegance Auto met. esr. srd. r/st	14T	£25,995
95M	C220D Elegance Auto met. 8 holes. r/st	17T	£21,995
96N	C220D Elegance Auto met. r/st	12T	£23,595
96P	C230 Kompressor Sport met. drs. r/st	11T	£28,595
96P	C230 Kompressor Sport met. 5 speed	7T	£27,995
97P	C230 Kompressor Sport Auto met	4T	£30,995
94L	C250D Elegance Auto r/st. alarm	40T	£19,995
96P	C280 Elegance Auto met. air con. 10h alloys	13T	£30,995
	E-CLASS		
93L	200TE Auto esr. fca	35T	£19,995
94M	E220 Auto met. fca. walnut	38T	£20,995
94M	E220 Auto met. 16 oz alloys. dtch. b/styling	50T	£20,995
96P	E230 Avantgarde Auto met. air. srd. r/st	9T	£32,995
96P	E230 Estate Auto met. air. srd. htw.	10T	£33,595
94L	E280 Auto met. cd	30T	£22,995
94L	E280 Auto met. stack cd. superb	30T	£23,995
96P	E290 Elegance met. air. srd. hst	10T	£35,595
96P	E300D Elegance Auto met. air	4T	£31,995
	S-CLASS & SLs		
95N	S280 met. hide climate, esr, 8h, r/st	25T	£36,595
95N	S280 met. piped hide. esr. clim. msc. alloys	16T	£37,995
96P	SL280 met. hide hts. r/seat. new model	4T	£57,995
95N	SL320 5 Spd Auto met. hide. rs. c/c. 8h	8T	£55,995
93K	S500 met. hide efs. clim. closers. 8h. stack CD	30T	£39,995

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94M SL500 'A'	Met. Lthr. Air con. R/seats. HFS. 9 holes	23T	£58,500
97S SL320 'K'	Met. Lthr. Climate. 'V. Latest Spec'	2T	£65,000
95M SL320 'A'	Met. Lthr. Climate. R.seats. ASR. 8 holes	18T	£55,000
93L SL320 'K'	Met. Lthr. Climate. R.seats. 8 holes	11T	£52,000
94L SL320 'A'	Met. Lthr. Climate. R.seats. 8 holes	19T	£50,000
93L SL320 'A'	Met. Lthr. Climate. R.seats. 3 holes	22T	£50,000
95M SL280 'K'	Azurite. Lthr. Climate. R.seats. 'Glass Top'. 'L.Spec'	14T	£57,500
91H 300SL 24V 'A'	Signal red. Lthr. R.seats. '1 Owner'	32T	£40,000
91H 300SL 24V 5SPD 'A'	Met. Lthr. Air con. ASR. 8 holes	30T	£42,000
90H 300SL 'A'	Arctic white. Lthr. R.seats. ++	38T	£37,500
93L S500 COUPE 'A'	Met. Lthr. Climate. 'Superb'	41T	£45,850
91J 420 SEC 'A'	Met. Lthr. Air con. [illegible]	53T	£25,000
97S S320 'A'	Azurite. Lthr. Climate. [illegible] ++	3T	£54,500
95N S320 5SPD 'A'	Met. Lthr. Climate. [illegible] 'Owner'	28T	£42,000
95M E320 COUPE 5SPD 'A'	Met. Lthr. Air con. [illegible]	18T	£39,500
95N E320 COUPE 'A'	Azurite. [illegible]	41T	£32,850

92K 300CE 'A'	Met. Lthr. Air con. Sport line. 8 holes	65T	£24,250
92K 230CE 'A'	Signal red. Lthr. 8 holes. + more	30T	£23,850
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97S E50 'A'	Met. Lthr. Climate. 'Total Spec', '347 V8 BHP'	1km	£65,000
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96P E320 AVANTGARDE 'A'	Met. Lthr. Air con. [illegible] ++	7T	£43,000
96N E280 CLASSIC ESTATE 'A'	Met. 7 seats. EGSR ++	2T	£30,850
97S E300 D ELEGANCE 'A'	Met. Air con. + more	2T	£33,850
94M E220T 'A'	Imperial red. '1 Owner'. 'As New'	15T	£24,000
90G 300E 24V 'A'	EFSx2. Air con. Sport line. ASR + more	43T	£17,850
92K 260E 24V 'A'	Met. OTG. 'Superb Throughout'	57T	£18,850
97S C230 SPORT 'A'	Met. Lthr. Air con. ETS + more	4T	£37,500
96N C230 SPORT KOMP MAN 'A'	Met. 'As New'	7T	£27,500
96N C200 ELEGANCE EST	Azurite. 'Superb'	18T	£24,500

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E200 auto met silver S/R May 96 12k m. £27,600 ono

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E280

96P. Avant/new shape. violane/met, a/c. blk/gry cloth 5 speed auto, C/C. 4000 miles. £36,500. No calls before Tuesday 22nd April.

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Auto 8/88, A/Silver, grey interior, walnut trim, alloys, superb. 45,300 miles. 2nd owner 6/90. £10,500

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1990 G. Red/beige leather. 1 owner, excellent condition. £15,950.
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Silver, Aug 92, 88,000 miles, FSH, £5000 extras, full spec.

£38,000.

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89F, metallic grey, air conditioning, cruise control, electric & heated front seats, FMBSH. 66,000 miles

£14,950

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560SEL

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1990 Astral Silver
All MB extras.
9,000 miles.
Mint, showroom cond
£47,000.
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380 SLC

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Same owner since 84
108,000 miles
Excellant condition
£9,750.
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1989 F met blue, blue hide/cloth 35K miles hard/soft top immaculate FMBSH
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300 SL

92 June metallic black/black lthr CD Lorinser wheels FMBSH immac cond £41,000 only

0973 326 416.

SLK 230

97 Metallic Silver
Black/ Red leather interior
Air con. Plus other extras above standard. Registered 1/4/97
Including special plate M999 SLK.
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280SL

1984, Nautic Blue, Fully loaded, inc air con, last owner 12 yrs, genuine sale.

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March (P Reg). Black with mushroom leather. 1,000 miles, 18" AMG alloys, rear seat. £63k. 01698 420808 after 5.

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SLK

Silver
Black leather interior
All extras
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Sports, '96P, latest spec, Brilliant Silver/ Grey hide, ACC, c/c, h/seats, r/seat, r/wipers, 3,000 miles, 1 owner. £61,950.
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Estate, '90H, Anthracite, auto, leather, 7 seats, a/c, ASD, alloys, rad cass, alarm. Excellent Condition, h/ mls but 1 owner + FMBSH.
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E230 Avantgarde P-reg, 4T, Viola Metallic/Grey Leather, Auto, Cruise, Climate, Electric Memory/Multi Contour Front Seats, Folding Mirrors, Parktronic, Rear Blind, Rain Sensor, HLW, Radio/CD + Spir Pack £38,995

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SL 280

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In stunning beryl blue with mushroom leather. 8 hole alloys, rear seats, tracker.
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Auto, 93L, black, grey cloth, walnut, electric stereo, FSH, *new* tyres, RHR, front central armrests, leather steering wheel, mudflaps, taxed & MOT'd till Sept.
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600SEL

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C180 ElEGANCE AUTO

Blue, black/ grey, 94M, FMBSH, 27k mls.
£18,495
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350SL

1972 auto, conv. FSH. summer coming! Rare opportunity to aquire Pagoda with soft top, low mileage - only 39K, show condition, met blue, new tyres, Becker radio, dust cover.
£15,950 ono.
01628 36351.

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Auto 95, metallic Green Black, Air conditioned, CD stack system, 1 owner, Pristine condition, 10,000 miles.
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C180 ELEGANCE Auto

94M, blue, alloys, split rear seat, 26k mls, excellent condition.
£18,400
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C180

Elegance, 95M, 16,000 miles, auto, blue, sunroof, alarm, radio/cassette.
£19,500.
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968

Club Sport

93K, Red, 34K miles, FPSH, VGC.
£22,000.
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300D AUTO

91H, met pearl *blue*, FSH, 91k, 2 own, 98 MOT.

£11,950 ono

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500SL

90H, 51k mls, metallic blue, cream hide, ABS, ASR, A/C, htd & elec mem seats, stereo, new soft top, rear seats, wind deflector, 2 owners, FMBSH. Immaculate condition, as new.
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260E

92K, Arctic blue, leather int, air con, 82,000 *miles*, 1 owner.
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MERCEDES

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SL500

19,000 miles FMBH, Pearl blue, Cream lthr, 97 Spec lights inc boot light, Loaded, Immac, AMG Split rims, new Mitch tyres worth 4K. L reg, gen reason for sale.
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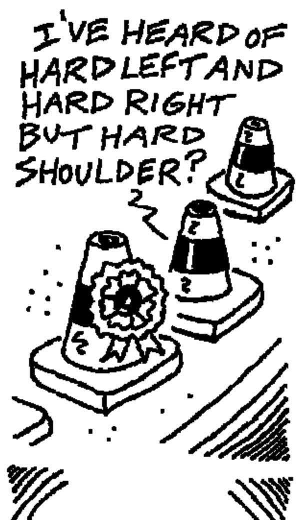
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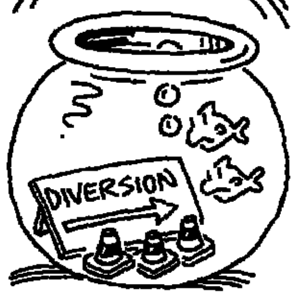

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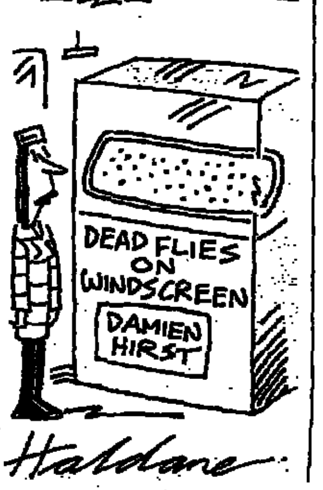


Daihatsu is in the throes of invading the European market with a five-strong range of smart yet tiny vehicles, reports **Ian Morton**

Daihatsu's Italian-designed five-door Move is set to galvanise the minicar market when it goes on sale in Europe next week. It is already a success in Japan, where 200,000 have been sold since 1995

Japan's dwarf warfare

Five new models are being launched by small-car specialist Daihatsu to take advantage of Europe's hunger for tiny cars.

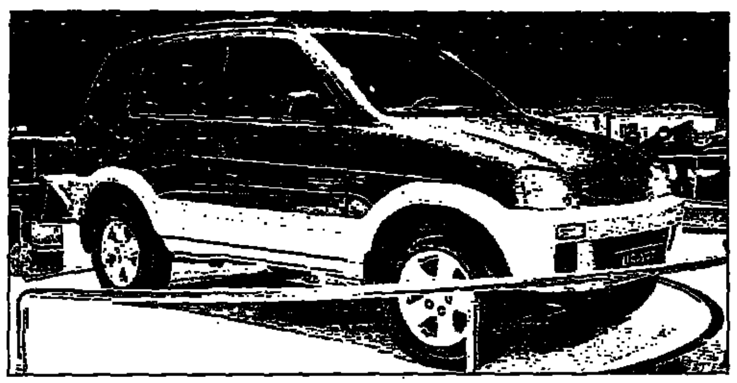
Daihatsu will spearhead a drive by Japanese carmakers to cash in on the mounting pressures on road space and pollution, launching new models simultaneously across Europe. The firm's objective: a four-fold increase in sales in Britain and a five-fold increase elsewhere in the EU by the Year 2000.

By then the final remnants of the old "gentlemen's agreement", limiting the numbers of Japanese-built cars which can be imported into Britain, will have disappeared and it will be open season in all EU markets. European cars under pressure from the new Japanese invasion will include the Ford Ka, the Seat Arosa and its VW equivalent due next year, the Fiat Cinquecento, the forthcoming Mercedes A-Class and Smart city cars, and the Rover Mini and its replacement.

Suzuki, Daihatsu's chief Japanese rival, is also expected to play a substantial role in the impending small car boom, with models such as the Wagon R, and through a proposed collaborative venture with General Motors.

Though a specialist in small cars, Daihatsu is neither a newcomer nor a tiddler operation. Founded in 1907, it is one-third owned by Toyota, and last year produced more than 800,000 vehicles — considerably more than Rover, Audi or Volvo. With its imminent torrent of new models, the firm's ambitions in Europe are now clear. Last year Britain was its biggest European market, with 7,500 sales. By the Year 2000 it intends to top 30,000 registrations here annually. Over the next year, Daihatsu UK will spend more on marketing than in the whole of the past five years.

The first new Daihatsu to hit the beaches is the Grand Move, a head-on competitor for the new generation of smaller MPVs such as the Renault Megane Scenic, the new European Car of the Year. Powered by a 1.5-litre, four-cylinder, 16-valve unit, it is an exceptionally roomy and adaptable alternative to the small estate. It arrived in UK showrooms on March 31 at £11,500 and £13,500 according to specification, both prices are on-the-road, including a year's road tax.



Four-wheel-drive Terios is a refined off-roader for street-use

The Move, designed in Italy, will galavanise the minicar market when it goes on sale on Monday. It is already a success in Japan where 200,000 have been sold since 1995.

Under 11ft long and only 4ft7in wide, it is unusually tall, and the smallest five-door car in the world. A compact nose and vertical tailgate mean a larger cabin area than rivals, and accommodates four adequately. Seats fold flat completely, providing a bed-like facility.

Weighing under 15cwt, the Move is powered by a 42bhp three-cylinder 847cc engine which is quite adequate for spritely urban use, but the car is capable of 80mph on the open road. Combined fuel consumption is quoted as 47.1mpg with five-speed manual box and 39.8mpg with optional three-speed automatic. It will be launched at £7,200 and £8,200 according to equipment. Both prices include road tax.

Next will come the Cuore, an inch shorter and nearly 2cwt lighter than the Move, and costing well under £7,000. A true compact lightweight built for city use, it nonetheless boasts an advanced 16-valve four-cylinder engine of 660cc producing 42bhp. It will be available from June in both three and five-door configurations.

The following month comes the Terios, a new 12ft3in sport/utility with full-time four-wheel drive but without high/low gear ratios. Powered by the 1.3 Charade engine, it is essentially for road use, and more refined than the Fourtrak and Sportrak cult off-roaders. Though bound for the Japanese market too, the Terios launched at the Geneva Motor Show — more evidence of Daihatsu's European intents. Prices will span £12,000 to £14,800.

Also coming in July is Daihatsu's diminutive hot-shot — the three-door Avanzato, a twin-cam turbo-charged 4WD vesion of the Cuore delivering 64bhp, 0 to 60mph in 8.5 seconds and 100mph. With a specification to include air conditioning, it will cost around £9,000.

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What's got three wheels, a V8 engine and will match a Porsche for speed? **Vaughan Freeman** finds out

Wild one gets an extra wheel

Part Jaguar, part Rover, and part guided missile. Mick Buckley's three-wheeled motorcycle is powered by a V8 engine that means he can match a Porsche 911 for speed.

Even the fastest motorcycles are rarely powered by engines bigger than 1,100cc, about the size of a small family hatchback's powerplant.

That was not enough for Buckley, who decided that despite his passion for classic two-wheeled machines, three wheels was much better for what he had in mind. If three-wheeled transport conjures images of golf carts or Robin Reliants, then the Buckley V8 trike will change all that.

The inspiration for the character of the trike is Buckley's custom-built 93 cubic inch Harley-Davidson bike, but even Harleys struggle to get a look into the new craze for three-wheelers with grunt. Scottish comedian Billy Connolly toured Australia on a trike in his latest television travel series. But even his beast might struggle to keep up with the Buckley machine.

Buckley started with the engine and the notion that the trike should be as short as possible. Usually three-wheeler motorcycles are powered by Volkswagen Beetle engines.

Apart from being only half the size of the unit that Buckley uses, they also have to be put at the back of the machine, making the steering very light.

But Buckley squeezes a 3.5-litre V8 Rover engine, originally used in cars like the Rover P6 and still used today in hairy-chested sports cars like the TVR, into his trikes. Located in the conventional motorcycling position beneath the rider, the engine looks massively over-sized, but then everything about Buckley's trikes is larger than life.

Instead of a manual gearbox, he uses the rear axle, transmission and four-speed automatic gearbox from a Jaguar. The engine and powertrain are fitted into a hand-crafted chassis made from massively strong industrial tubing that makes the average piece of scaffolding look like a liquorice stick.

The result is a motorcycling behemoth that will go from standstill to 60mph in five seconds, and, for anyone whose passion for speed drastically outweighs their desire to live, will reach a theoretical top speed of 160mph. Since the trikes sell for £4,700, that represents almost unrivalled performance per pound.

Buckley, who runs the Re-Cycles II motorcycle business in Brighton, says: "We build the trike to quite a tight specification. In fact they are massively over-engineered. You could put a bus engine into the chassis.

"We do two basic models, the Stealth and the Predator, and we build them to order. They feel very safe, especially with the engine at the front, which means the front wheel never lifts off the ground. The steering is always direct and surprisingly light, and the stopping capability is terrific.

"It is very easy to drive, you don't need any muscle, and it is fully automatic. They are very solid on the road and are immense fun. It has much the same acceleration as a Porsche 911, except you do have a windscreen on a 911.

"Given that the trike delivers around 26 or 27mph for every 1,000rpm, we calculate it should have a top speed of 160mph, but that is not mandatory. You do not have to go that fast on it. You can drive around town at 30mph very comfortably."

The peculiar characteristics of the trike are reflected in the sort of equipment that goes with it. A tow-bar is one of the optional extras on offer, lap seatbelts are also offered and built-in stereos are planned.

The trike's eccentric characteristics are reflected in the sort of people who are buying them. One customer has just signed up for one as a 76th birthday present to himself, while publican and brewer, Bev Robbins sees the trike as the perfect way to have fun and to promote his pub and seafront café.

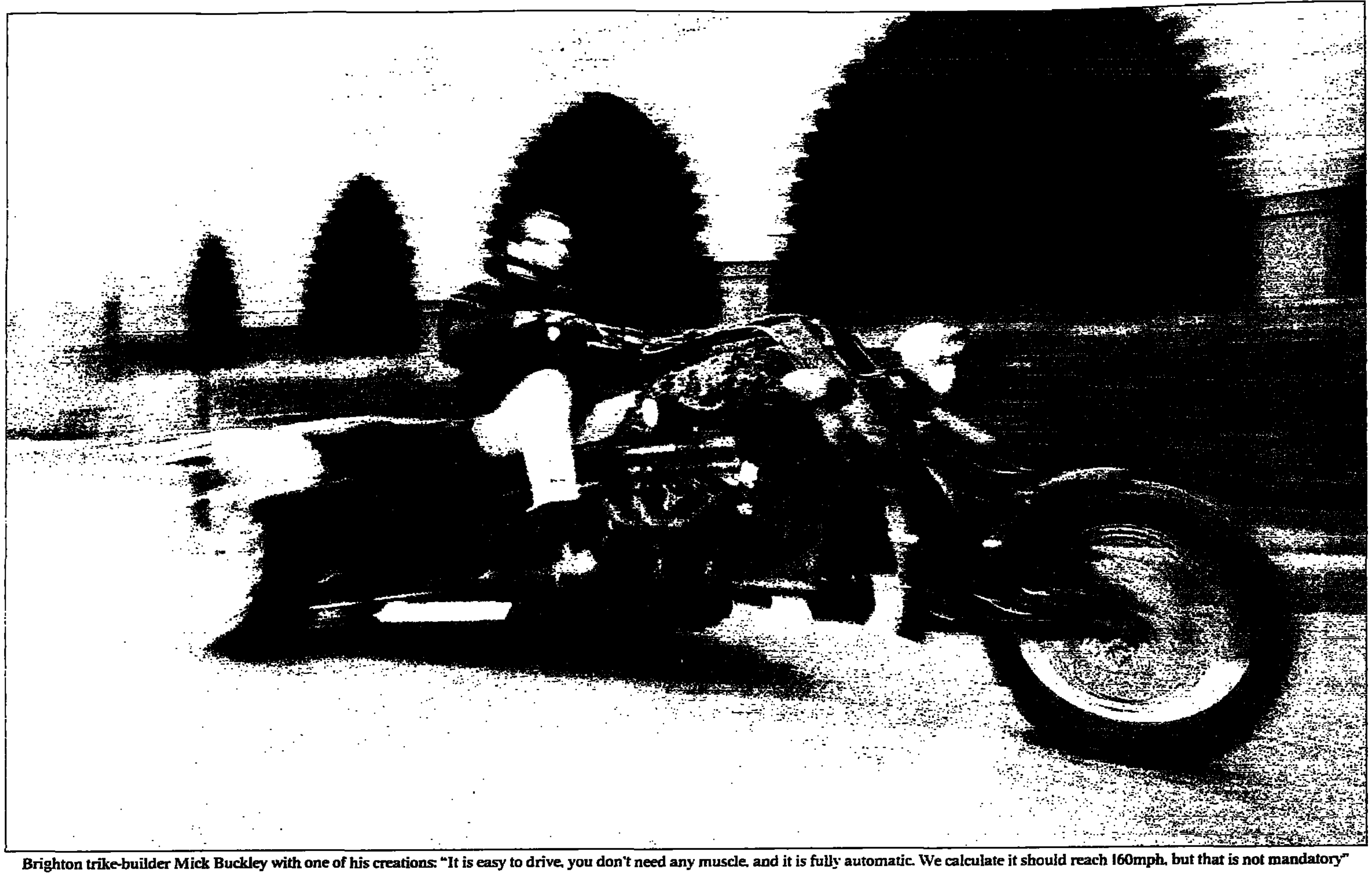
Bev, operations director of Brighton's Waterfront cafe, a favourite haunt of bikers, says: "When I first saw the trike I thought, 'My God, what a beast'.

"I used to ride motorbikes. I had AJS 250cc machines and a 350cc Royal Enfield. The trike engine is ten times as big so it's quite different — an amazing machine.

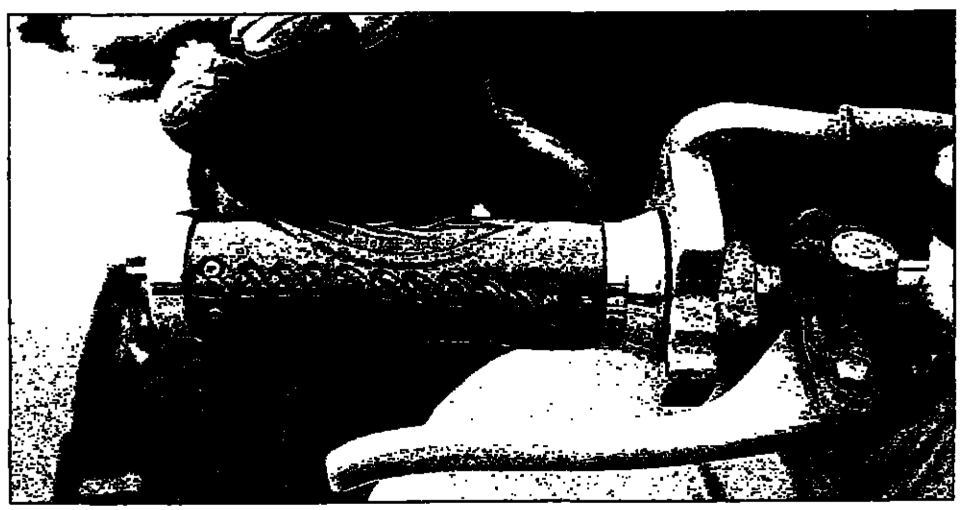
"I hadn't ridden for quite some time and know too many people who have come off two wheels, largely, it must be said, due to thoughtless motorists and pedestrians. So a motorcycle with three wheels seemed a good idea. It is fun and it's different."

Bev's trike will have a petrol tank shaped as a beer barrel, and behind the driver will be a platform capable of taking either nine-gallon firkins of beer or passengers. Chairman of the Sussex Society of Licenced Victuallers, Bev also brews beer at his Hand-in-Hand pub and says: "I deliver beer to other pubs in a van — but delivering it on the trike will be much more fun."

ANDREW HASSON



Brighton trike-builder Mick Buckley with one of his creations: "It is easy to drive, you don't need any muscle, and it is fully automatic. We calculate it should reach 160mph, but that is not mandatory"



Handle with care: trike throttle is linked to a Rover V8 engine and Jaguar gearbox

TRIKE STYLE

Engine: 3.5-litre Rover V8 matched to adapted Jaguar rear axle and four-speed automatic gearbox.
Chassis: 2in high tensile industrial tubing, welded and hand-cut.
Performance: estimated top speed 160mph, 0 to 60mph in around five seconds.
Equipment: rear *bench seat for two* passengers, seatbelts, tow bar. Extra wheel.
Price: £4,700.

Zany Scottish comedian Billy Connolly rode a trike on his televised tour of Australia

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Climber Sir Chris Bonington tells **Andrew Pierce** of his driving pitfalls

Sherpa man picks Volvo for peak performance

Sir Chris Bonington, probably the most recognisable name in mountaineering, is in Tibet, leading a British expedition to the highest unclimbed range in the world, Sepu Kangri. Sir Chris will tackle "the great snow mountain" alongside his climbing partner, Dr Charles Clarke.

As well as being one of the world's most inhospitable places, the Sepu Kangri range is among the most remote, virtually unknown to the outside world and the next on the list that Sir Chris has decided to add to his list of mountaineering achievements.

Dr Clarke saved Sir Chris's life on an earlier expedition, bringing him down from an attempt on the south-west face of Everest in 1975.

Sir Chris has devoted his life to high-altitude climbing. It is a career that has taken him to the top of Everest, though on the way he has lost a number of friends and colleagues.

Knighted last year, his love affair with mountains began at the age of 16. In 1962, he made the first British ascent of the north wall of the Eiger, and he is now known the world over as the grand old man of the mountains.

Nowadays, however, Sir Chris finds himself working as much as a businessman as a climber. Instead of a sherpa, mules or pack-bearers, Sir Chris relies on the load-carrying abilities of a large Volvo, equipped with a telephone on which he conducts business at a high-volume, arranging meetings, lectures, flights and interviews.

But there is still no pin-striped suit to go with the car: he continues to wear the climber's traditionally brightly coloured outfits even while at the wheel.

STEERING COLUMN

How did you first learn to drive?

My family never owned a car. I started learning as a second lieutenant in the Royal Tank Regiment when I was stationed in Germany 40 years ago. My colonel sent me on a driving and maintenance instructor's course with the admonition that I was the least mechanically minded officer he had ever met, but I was the only one he could spare. Time before the course was tight. I had to have my driving licence to attend it. The regimental transport officer who took my test let me through despite the fact that I drove down a one-way street the wrong way.

What was your first car?

A bright blue Opel convertible that my squadron sergeant sold me as a good buy. The big end went three weeks later. I couldn't afford to have it fixed. My next one was a Mini van bought with my earnings from lecturing about my pioneering British ascent of the north wall of the Eiger in 1962. It was an A-registration and we called her Amelia because her first letters were AMM. In the five years I had her, she clocked up 150,000 miles.

What car do you drive now?

A Volvo 850 T5.

Do you like driving?

It's a means of getting where I want, be it work or climbing. I do about 30,000 miles a year but use the train when I can.

What is your most hated car?

The most aggravating one was a bright yellow Ford Consul 3000. It was fast but the handling was terrible.

What is your dream car?

I don't dream about exotic cars. I like ones that are fast and practical that you can put a lot of gear in, sleep in, and get through the snow to go climbing in winter. My dream car therefore is a Volvo 850 all-wheel-drive.

What is your worst habit in the car?

Using my carphone — hands-free mind you — to talk to any friend I can think of to alleviate the boredom of driving up and down the motorway. It's an expensive habit.

What infuriates you most about other drivers?

When they dawdle in long queues in the Lake District crawling along at 20mph looking at the view. It would be much better for them to get out of their cars and walk.

What is the most unusual thing you have done in your car?

Travelling in a battered Hillman Estate back from Kathmandu to Chamonix, below Mont Blanc, in 1961. The car tried to do a pole vault when the half-shaft dropped out halfway across Turkey.

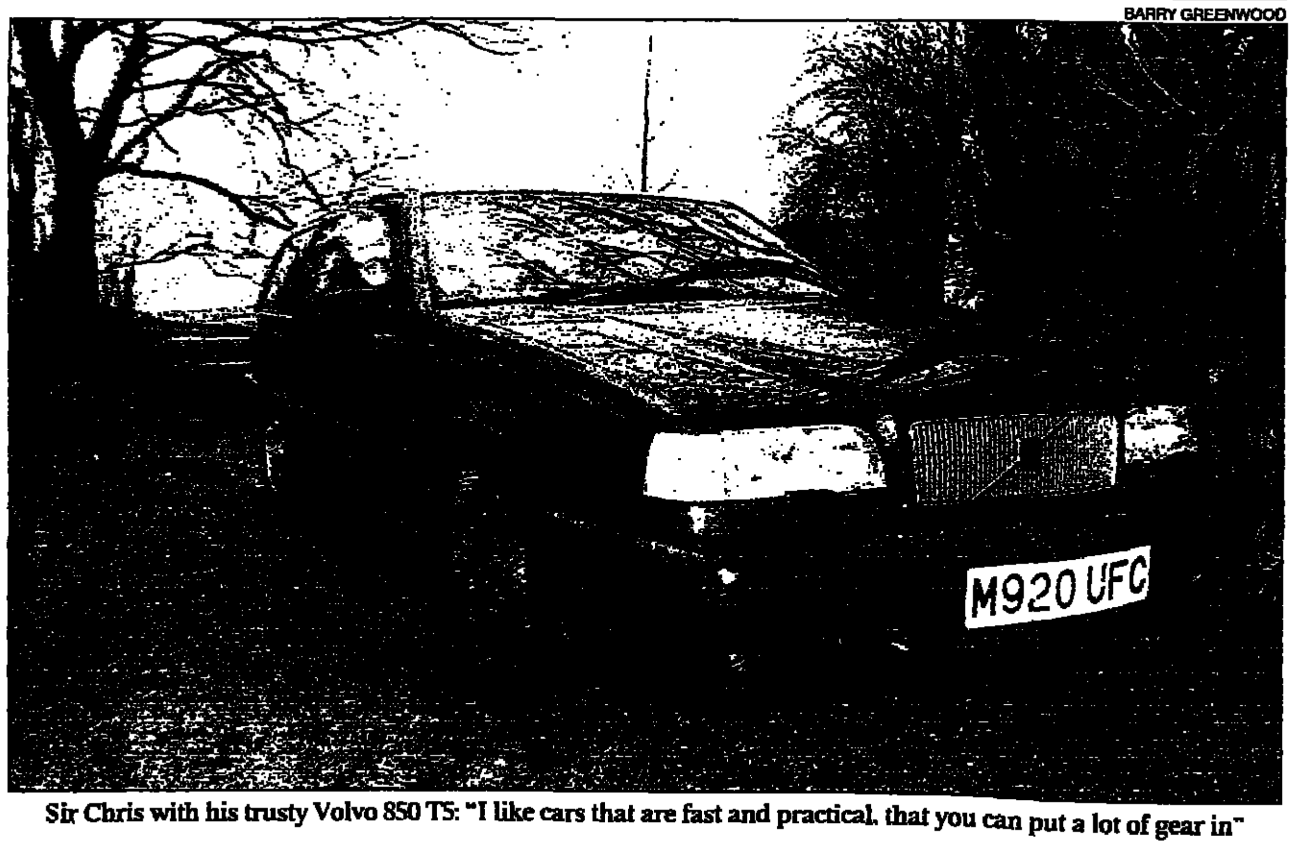
Have you ever had points on *your licence?*

Yes but not in the last four years.

What do you listen to in the car?

Radio 4, a bit of Radio 5. I am a real news-freak. I also enjoy radio plays.

BARRY GREENWOOD



Sir Chris with his trusty Volvo 850 T5: "I like cars that are fast and practical, that you can put a lot of gear in"

"Where can I sell something fast?"
See p. 8

[illegible]

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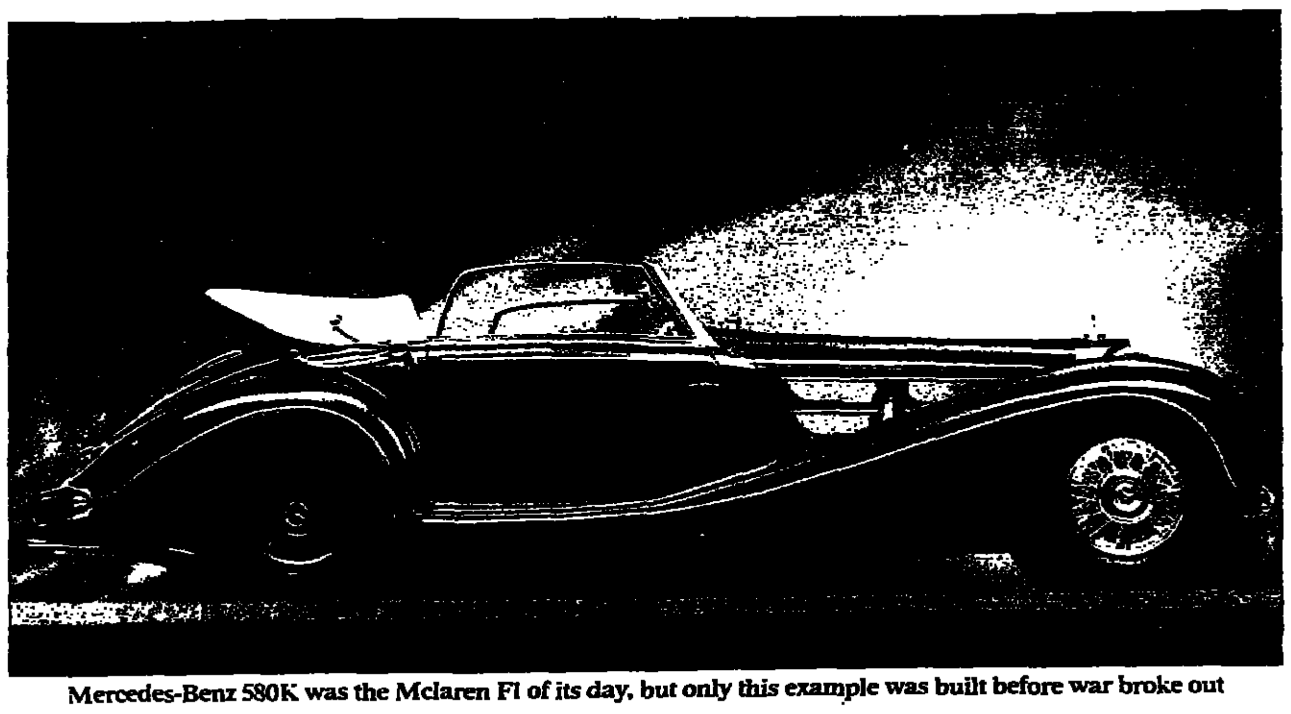
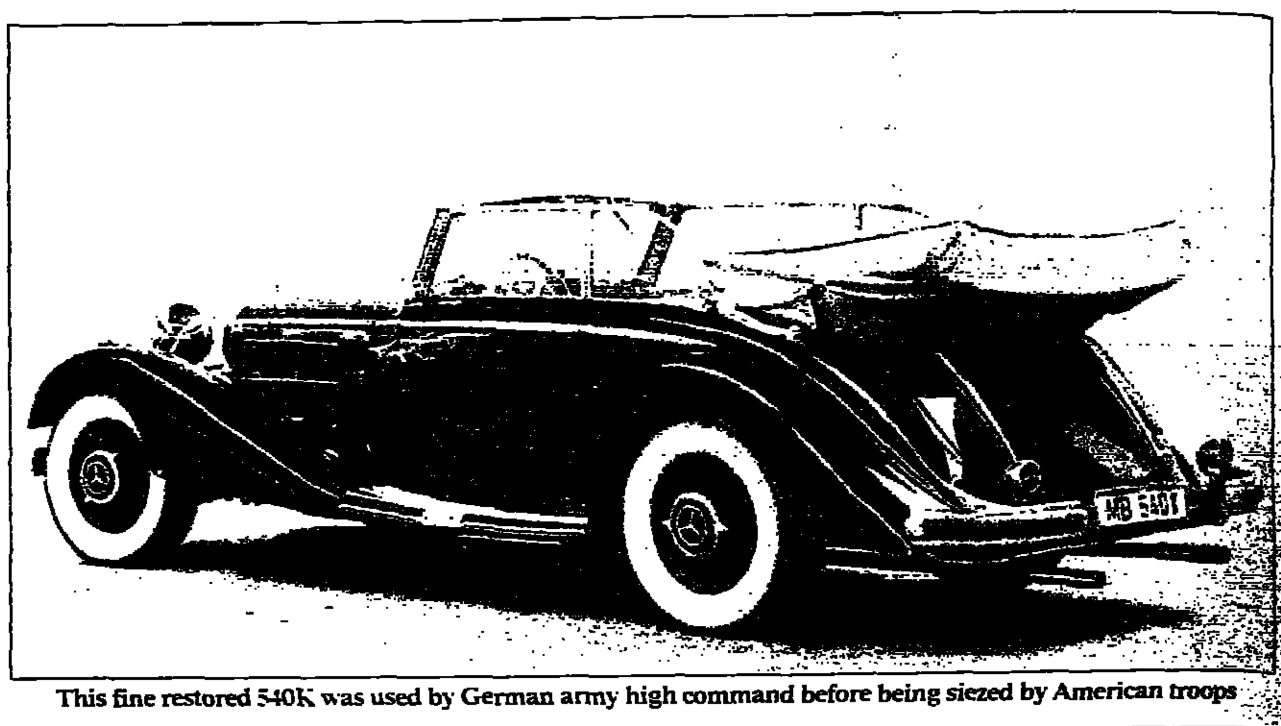
Unique treasures from German carmaking history are set for a museum sale, reports **Alan Copps**

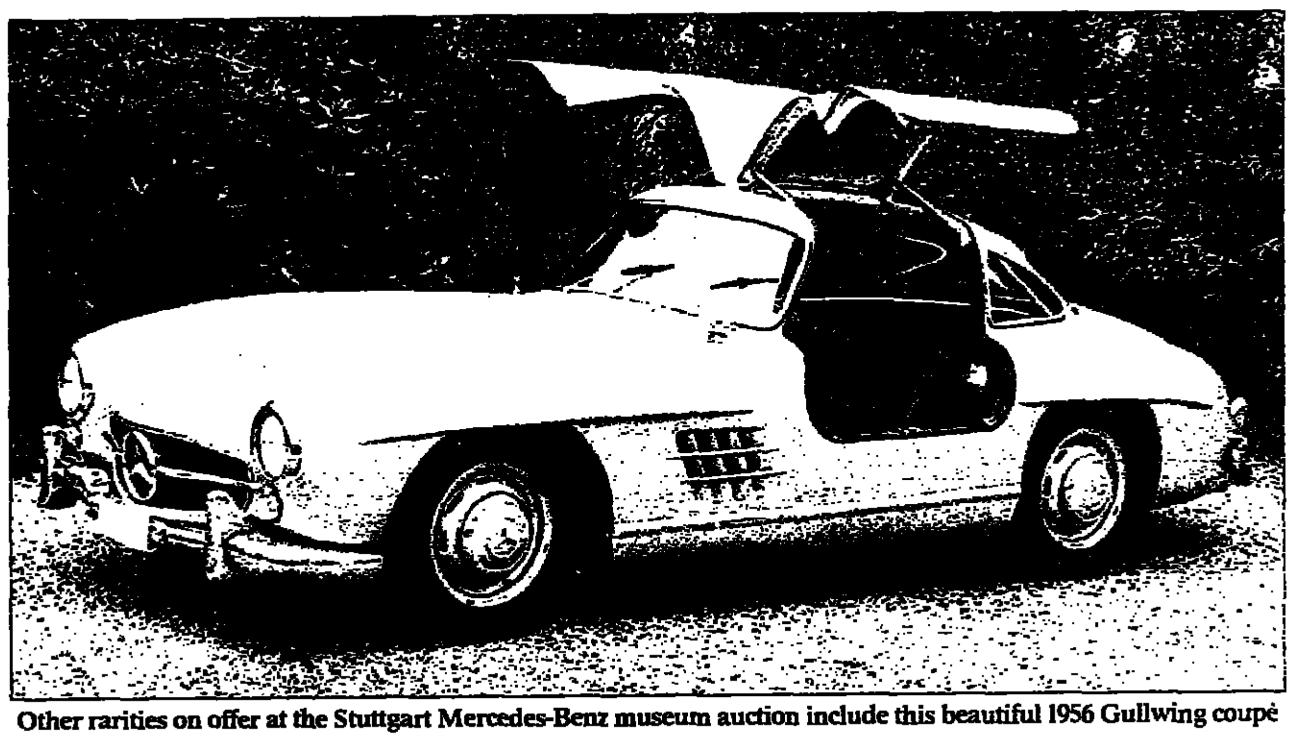
Under the hammer: rare Benz gems



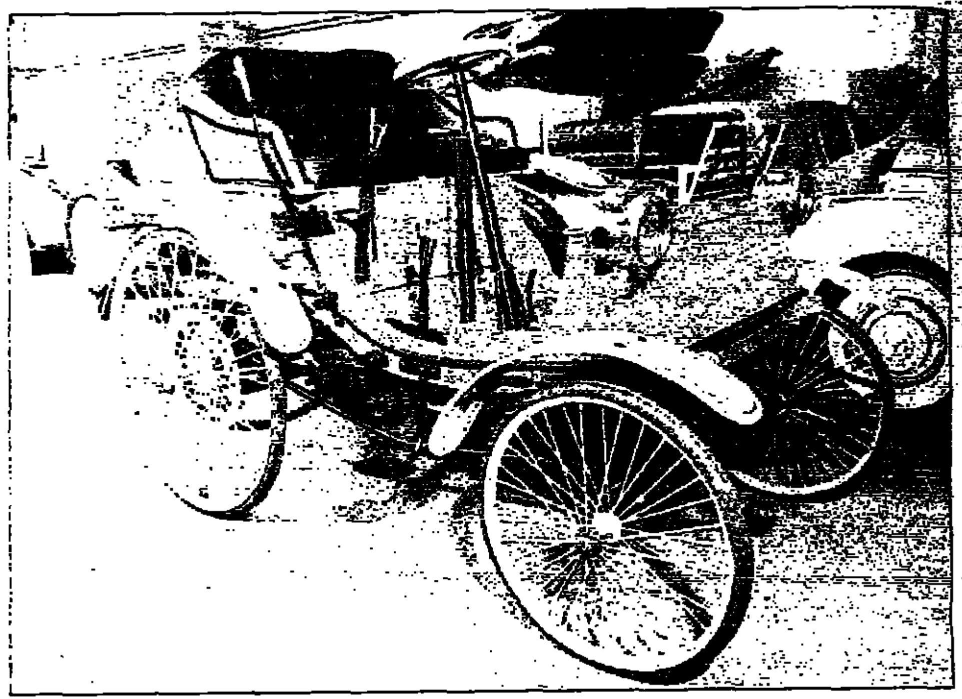
Mercedes-Benz 580K was the Mclaren Fl of its day, but only this example was built before war broke out



This fine restored 540K was used by German army high command before being siezed by American troops



Other rarities on offer at the Stuttgart Mercedes-Benz museum auction include this beautiful 1956 Gullwing coupé



Roger Benz Velo from 1895 is an example of a car that caused a Franco-German row

A rare example of a model that played an important part in the early development of the automobile and provoked a row between two of the industry's pioneers, goes on sale today at the Mercedes-Benz Museum in Stuttgart.

The 1895 Roger Benz Velo is being sold by the museum after 30 years on display there. One of the later examples of its kind, it is being sold to make space for the museum's ever-changing display, says Simon Kidston of the auctioneers, Brooks Europe.

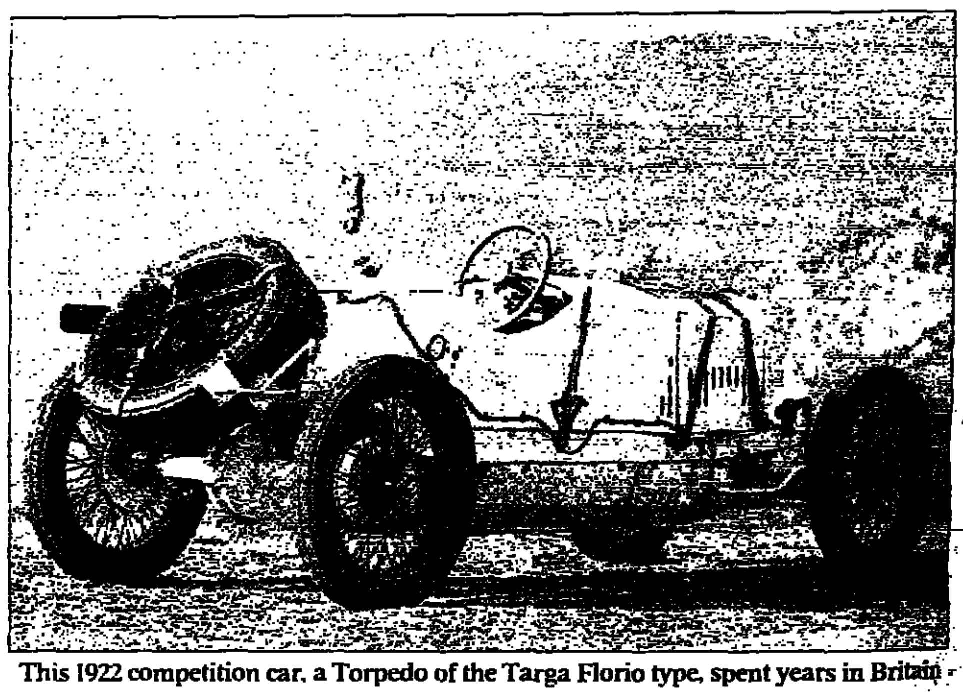
The name Roger comes from Emile Roger, the French businessman who was the first customer for a Benz automobile, which arrived in four packing crates at the Panhard et Levassor engineering works in Paris on March 16 1888.

He soon acquired his own works and started assembling the cars from components to avoid import duty. But he sold these under his own name, claiming that patriotic Frenchmen resisted buying a car called Benz because of its obvious German origins. "Carl Benz never forgave him for this falsehood, yet it is arguable that without Roger, the Benz marque could not have succeeded, for he built up worthwhile markets in Britain and the United States as well as France," says the catalogue. Even Benz is reported as saying: "*If Germany was the* father of the automobile, France was its mother."

For although Roger might *have been guilty of taking* credit for Benz's invention, he can also claim a genuine place in the history of that mixture of *mechanics, invention* and marketing which has characterized the global motor industry from its earliest days. For it *was Roger who convinced* Benz that the three-wheeled layout of his first cars had no future and that he should turn *his attention to four* wheels.

What is astonishing about the Roger Benz, described as an ideal entry for the London-*Brighton veteran run*, is its price, estimated at £26,750 to £32,000, it's a snip in a sale that includes at least one *genuine £1 million* car.

That honour must go to the 1939 Mercedes-Benz Sindelfingen Special Cabriolet 'A', known as the 580K prototype. "It was the McLaren Fl of its day. A supercar which would have been built if the war had *not intervened*. To a Mercedes collector, that is one of the ultimate cars available," says Kidston.



This 1922 competition car, a Torpedo of the Targa Florio type, spent years in Britain

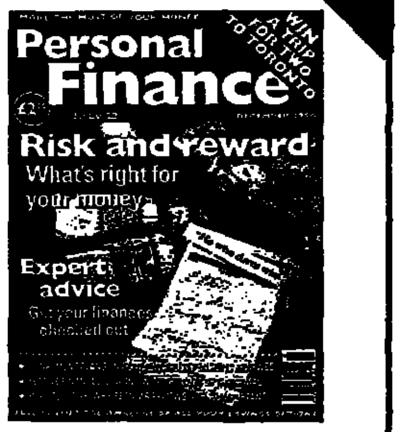
Events determined that this was the only car made of its kind, the ultimate development of the 540K. With a 5.4-litre supercharged engine it was designed for the maker's stand at a Paris Motor Show that was overtaken by the outbreak of war. At war's end, bearing blue-grey Luftwaffe livery, it was seized by British troops in Westphalia and used as a staff car by a Brigadier Groves. It later passed to a Danish collector and has been totally restored, winning several *concours d'elegance* prizes in recent years.

An excellently restored 1938 540K is on offer at an estimate of up to £135,000. One of the few genuine 100mph road-going cars of its era, it was delivered to the German army's high command and used throughout the war until seized by the US Army.

A 1922 competition car, a two-seat Torpedo of the Targa Florio type, which spent many years in British collections and has recently figured to great acclaim in retrospectives of that Sicilian road race, is also on offer. Other rarities include a 1956 Gullwing coupé, and another one-off, a special 1965 coupé version of the 600 limousine, built as personal transport for Professor Doctor Fritz Nallinger, head of the passenger car department of Mercedes, who is regarded as a vital figure in the marque's post-war success both in production and racing cars.

The sale today is the second to be held by Brooks at the Mercedes museum, and part of an expanding operation in Europe to take advantage of the revival in the classic car business.

This week, Brooks also announced that in September it would be holding its first Paris sale in cooperation with the French auction house, Tajan.



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Legal victory over sour Polo

A court ruling on a dud car could bring hope for other buyers, reports

Tony Dawe

How it should be: smiling Polo buyers in VW's advert

The owners of a faulty Volkswagen Polo which featured in our Cars from Hell series last year have won a partial county court victory which will bring hope and guidance to other motorists faced with nightmare vehicles.

Dianne Gilbert Scott and her husband, Peter, from Stroud, Gloucestershire, claimed they had only been able to drive their new car for 12 days in the months after buying it because of repeated gearbox faults. They sued Blade Motor Company of Gloucester for damages under the 1994 Sale and Supply of Goods Act.

Deputy District Judge Alan Johnson ruled that the Polo was "*not safe to drive*" and ordered Blade to pay £500 damages. He also offered advice for others in a similar position on how legally to reject unsatisfactory cars.

His judgment suggested that if a garage refused to replace a car or reimburse the money after an owner had rejected it, the owner should sell the car and then sue for the lost amount. Mr and Mrs Gilbert Scott appeared to have followed the *wrong course in* hanging onto the car, although not using it, and continuing to negotiate with *Blade and Volkswagen after* rejecting it.

"I hope the judgment will be used to save others all the unnecessary grief I suffered," Mrs Gilbert Scott said. "It would appear that the correct course of action is to reject and sell with experts' reports, and to claim one's loss from the *supplying dealer in the small* claims court, which can deal with claims of up to £3,000."

Mrs Gilbert Scott's prob*lems with her new Polo had* begun as soon as she drove it away from Blade in September 1995. She thought the *gearbox was stiff and 12 days* later it started to fail. She found it impossible to select reverse.

She took the car back to Blade, but within days the gears had gone again. When her husband took it for a test run, he found he couldn't select first or second gear and had the hair-raising experience of negotiating roundabouts in driving sleet in third. A technical inspection confirmed the car caused a potentially dangerous driving situation.

In his ruling, the judge said: "The car was not of satisfactory quality in that it was not fit for all the purposes for which goods of this kind are commonly supplied as; it was not free from minor defects, and it was not safe to drive.

"Having read the expert's reports, it is clear that the defect *to the gearbox* did in certain conditions make the vehicle dangerous and that it would be extremely unwise to *drive a car in such a* condition."

Mr and Mrs Gilbert Scott sold the Polo for £1,000 less *than they paid for it*. The judge said that if they had done that immediately after rejecting the car, he would have awarded *them higher damages* of £750, representing the £1,000 loss minus £250 for their brief use of the car.